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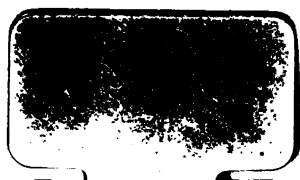
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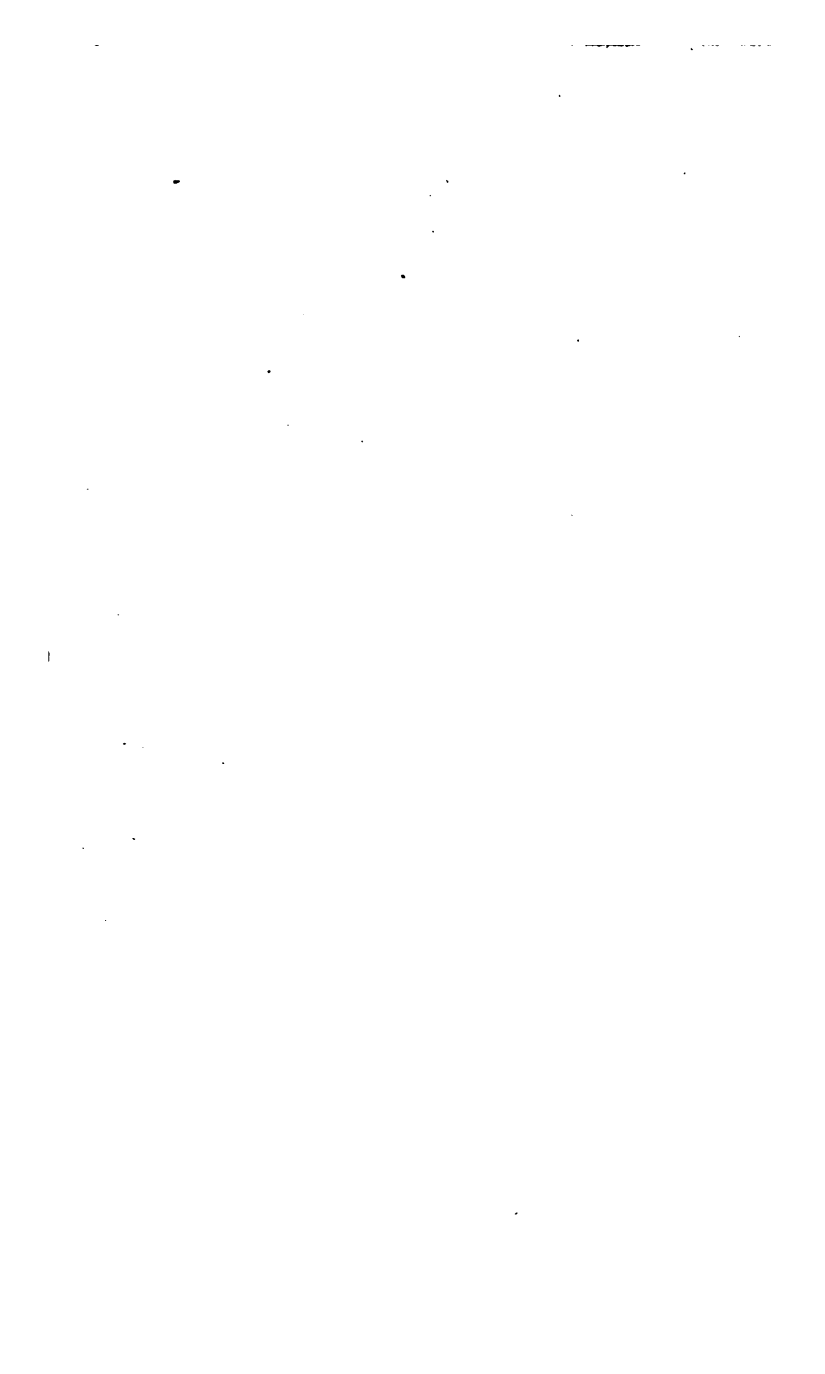
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THE
BOOK OF PSALMS;
WITH
REFLECTIONS AND PRAYERS.

BY THE
REV. JOSEPH JONES, M.A.,
INCUMBENT OF REPTON.



L O N D O N :
PRINTED FOR THE
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PREFATORY NOTICE.

It scarcely needs to be observed, that the Book of Psalms is of a very miscellaneous nature; but its characteristic appears to be that it is the Book of Spiritual Religion, describing the views and feelings of the true believer in very different circumstances. If we look upon religion as consisting of light, life, and action, the Psalms undoubtedly comprehend the whole of it; for the Christian may be instructed by them in his faith, and guided by them in his practice: but still the Spiritual Life is the prominent and pervading subject. We see it here in all its fluctuations and vicissitudes; in its strength and weakness, its elevations and depressions, its joys and sorrows, its hopes and fears, its afflictions and consolations, its conflicts and victories.

The Psalms, being thus viewed, must be accounted invaluable in many respects; and especially as furnishing a standard of spiritual religion; showing us its reality and what it is; and guiding and guarding us in a subject concerning which it is easy to make very serious mistakes. We may also look upon them as amply furnishing the soul with its proper aliment; for by the right use of them we shall strengthen and enliven the holy affections of piety within us. What, indeed, is piety, if it be not life? And what is life, if it do not harmonize with the delineations of it which are given to us in these inspired pages?

Of the present volume but little need be said. It is designed for the use of the private Christian who desires to form himself, with regard to the divine life,

under the influence of the Holy Spirit, on the only true model and standard—the Word of God. To learning and elegance, to depth and acuteness, to novelty and ingenuity, it has not the slightest pretensions. It is hoped, however, that the mere distribution of the Psalms into their distinct but connected parts, will enable the reader to study them with greater ease and advantage than if less attention had been given to that point. As to the few plain reflections which are added to each Psalm, they may possibly be of some use to him in his meditation on the sacred text.

I readily own myself greatly indebted to commentators on the Bible; but yet I question the real use and benefit of prolix reflections. The commentator has succeeded in his proper work when he has elucidated a text; has given the true, at least the best interpretation of it; so that it shall be really understood: and I would have him to advance a few sound and pious remarks, to assist the mind of his reader in the exercise of devout and practical meditation. But if the mind be overloaded with the writer's reflections, so that its own independent action is suspended or superseded, and the divine teacher (the sacred text) is forgotten in the human, or nearly so, I do not think that the best method is adopted for promoting sound spiritual edification. We profit more in the reading of Scripture by making our own reflections than by merely reading the reflections of others. In its meditation on the sacred pages the soul should be free: the wings of the eagle ought not to be hampered too much by human bandages.

J. J.

Repton, September 1848.

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HEBREW VERSE.

In order that we may read the Psalms (and, indeed, any of the poetical parts of Scripture,) with greater delight and benefit, we should have some right notion of the nature of Hebrew verse. The following brief notice of the subject may suffice here.

The characteristic of Hebrew poetry is Parallelism; that is, a certain equality, resemblance, or relationship between the members of each period; so that in two lines, or members of the same period, things shall answer to things, and words to words, as if fitted to each other by a kind of rule or measure.

Three sorts of parallel lines demand our consideration.

I. "Cognate Parallelism."

The thought which is expressed in the first line is repeated in the second line in stronger words, or more emphatically. This species of parallelism is the most frequent of all.
See Psalm xxi. 1—8.

II. "Constructive Parallelism."

Word does not answer to word, and sentence to sentence, as equivalent or opposite; but there is a correspondence and equality between the different propositions, in respect of the shape and turn of the whole sentence: such as noun answering to noun, verb to verb, member to member, negative to negative, interrogative to interrogative.
See Psalm xix. 7—10. cxlviii. 7—13.

III. "Antithetic Parallelism."

Two lines correspond one with another, by an opposition of terms and sentiments; the second is contrasted with the first, sometimes in expression, sometimes in sense only.
See Psalm xx. 7, 8. xxx. 5.

Each of these kinds of parallelism admits of many subordinate varieties; and, in combination of verses, the several kinds are perpetually intermingled. This enlivens and beautifies the composition, and frequently gives peculiar distinctness and precision to the train of thought.

1. Sometimes the lines are "Bi-membral;" that is, they consist each of double members, or two propositions.
See Psalm xlv. 6 and 10. cxliv. 5, 6.
2. There are parallels formed by a repetition of part of the first sentence.
See Psalm lxxvii. 1, 11, 16.
3. There are parallel Triplets.
A third line is added to two parallel lines.
See Psalm cxii. 10. xci. 7.
The three lines may be constructive.
See Psalm cxii. 9. cxxxv. 7.
4. There are parallels of four lines, which make one stanza.
See Psalm xxxvii. 1, 2. This Psalm is chiefly composed of such stanzas.
5. In stanzas of four lines the parallelism may be alternate.
See Psalm ciii. 11, 12. xxxiii. 13, 14.
6. Stanzas may consist of five lines.
They may have a line thrown in between two pairs of cognate parallels.
See Psalm xxxix. 12.
They may have a line added to four parallel lines.
See Psalm xlv. 3.

THE BOOK OF PSALMS.

PSALM I.

DAY 1.] MORNING PRAYER.

Instructive : the conduct and end of good and bad men. Author uncertain ; probably Ezra. Compare Jeremiah xvii. 5—6.

(I. *Conduct and happiness of the good man.*)

- 1 BLESSED is the man
That walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly,
Nor standeth in the way of sinners,
Nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.
2 But his delight is in the law of the Lord ;
And in His law doth he meditate day and night.
3 And he shall be like a tree
 planted by the rivers of water,
That bringeth forth his fruit in his season ;
His leaf also shall not wither ;
And whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

(II. *Unhappiness of the wicked.*)

- 4 The ungodly are not so ;
But are like the chaff which the wind driveth away.
5 Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the
 judgment,
Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.
6 For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous :
But the way of the ungodly shall perish.

REFLECTIONS.

Here observe three things; the Conduct of the good man; his Blessedness; and the Contrast between him and the wicked man.

1. His Conduct. As to evil, he keeps far from the counsels, the course of life, and the society of the wicked. He stands, as it were, at a distance from sin and sinners.—As to good, he delights in God's word, and makes it the subject of his continual meditation.

2. His Blessedness. Observe him in this world. The emblem of him is a green, flourishing, and fruitful tree. He is a tree of righteousness. He enjoys the divine favour; for God approves his course of life.—Observe him in the last day: he stands in the judgment; he is acquitted; he is in the congregation of the righteous; and he is advanced to everlasting happiness.

3. The Contrast. The counsel of the ungodly is error and folly, and their way is evil. Truth and obedience are forgotten by them. They are as chaff, light and worthless, driven away by the whirlwind of God's displeasure, to be burnt "with unquenchable fire." They are condemned in judgment, and perish for ever.

O Christian! consider these things: seek divine grace; renounce evil; search the Scriptures; and thus shalt thou be a tree "the planting of the Lord," blessed now and for evermore.

PRAYER.

Grant, O Lord, that by Thy grace we may hate and

renounce sin, and so delight in Thy holy word, that, following it in faith and practice, we may please Thee both in will and deed, and finally obtain everlasting blessedness, through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

PSALM II.

Prophetical: the author, David. It celebrates the victories of Christ and of His Gospel. Compare Acts iv. 25, 26.

(I. *Opposition to Christ's kingdom.*)

- 1 Why do the heathen rage,
And the people imagine a vain thing?
- 2 The kings of the earth set themselves,
And the rulers take counsel together,
Against the Lord, and against His Anointed, saying,
- 3 "Let us break their bands asunder,
"And cast away their cords from us."

(II. *The folly of such opposition.*)

- 4 He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh :
The Lord shall have them in derision.
- 5 Then shall He speak unto them in His wrath,
And vex them in His sore displeasure.
- 6 "Yet have I set my King
"Upon my holy hill of Zion."

(III. *The preaching of the Gospel.*)

- 7 "I will declare the decree :
"The Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son ;
"This day have I begotten Thee.
- 8 "Ask of me,
"And I shall give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance,

“And the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession.

9 “Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron;

“Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel.”

(IV. *Exhortation to receive it.*)

10 Be wise now, therefore, O ye kings:

Be instructed, ye judges of the earth.

11 Serve the Lord with fear,

And rejoice with trembling.

12 Kiss the Son, lest He be angry,

And ye perish from the way,

When His wrath is kindled but a little.

Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him.

REFLECTIONS.

What different, but what important, subjects for our consideration!

1. See the Impiety and Folly of man. He opposes Christ, and rejects His authority. Thus the Jews and Gentiles acted at first: thus men have acted through all ages; and thus every natural man acts. Is not the feeling of his heart, “I will not have this man to reign over me?”

2. See the dealings of God. He sets at nought the counsels and rage of the wicked: He punishes them for their folly: and His purpose shall stand. Messiah is established in kingly supremacy: He is “Head over all things to the Church.”

3. See the Decree. The Gospel is a declaration, that Christ is the Son of God, and that God hath given to us eternal life in Him. All nations belong to Him: "all power is given unto Him in heaven and in earth:" He is able to bless, protect, and prosper His faithful people, and also to punish His adversaries.

4. See the object of true Wisdom. Whether we be high or low, what is our duty; what is our happiness? Submission to the Son of God. To be instructed; to be believing and obedient; faithfully to serve, and humbly to rejoice; this is our duty: thus we shall escape wrath, and thus we shall be blessed here and for ever.

PRAYER.

O Lord, dispel our ignorance, subdue our pride, and remove our unbelief, that we may come to Christ, and take His yoke upon us. May He who is King in Zion rule in our hearts, and in the hearts of all mankind, by His word and Spirit, to Thy honour and glory, and to our salvation. Amen.

PSALM III.

Prayer expressing confidence in God under affliction. The author, David; who wrote it, probably, when he left Jerusalem on the rebellion of Absalom. 2 Sam. xv. 14.

(I. *Troubles of the godly.*)

1 Lord, how are they increased that trouble me!

Many are they that rise up against me.

2 Many there be which say of my soul,

"There is no help for him in God."

(II. Their resource and confidence.)

- 3 But Thou, O Lord, art a shield for me;
My glory, and the lifter up of my head.
4 I cried unto the Lord with my voice,
And He heard me out of His holy hill.
5 I laid me down and slept;
I awakened; for the Lord sustained me.
6 I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people,
That have set themselves against me round about.

(III. Prayer and acknowledgment.)

- 7 Arise, O Lord; save me, O my God:
For Thou hast smitten all mine enemies upon the
cheek-bone;
Thou hast broken the teeth of the ungodly.
8 Salvation belongeth unto the Lord:
Thy blessing is upon Thy people.

REFLECTIONS.

1. We must not account it strange if our enemies be numerous, and if the taunts of scoffers often increase our anguish. Such was the experience of David, and also of our blessed Lord. In such trials we must look to God, who is our only and all-sufficient refuge.

2. They who pray cannot be long unhappy. If we look to God in faith as our Defender, Glory, and Deliverer, and pray to Him, we shall be heard and answered; we shall repose in safety; and fear shall be banished from our hearts.

3. The true Christian unites prayer and praise; earnest petition and joyful exultation; the language

of humility and of confidence. How secure and happy are they who have the God of our salvation for their defence and support !

PRAYER.

However, O Lord, the men of the world may deride us, be Thou our Helper. In all our troubles, may we look to Thee in faith, pour out our hearts before Thee in prayer, and experience Thy goodness. All salvation, all deliverance is from Thee ; and Thy blessing is upon Thy people : and to Thee be all the praise and glory, through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

 PSALM IV.

Prayer in trouble and affliction : the author, David. Written perhaps on the same occasion as the preceding Psalm. An Evening Hymn.

(I. *Prayer.*)

- 1 Hear when I call, O God of my righteousness :
Thou hast enlarged me when I was in distress ;
Have mercy upon me, and hear my prayer.

(II. *Expostulation and Admonition.*)

- 2 O ye sons of men, how long will ye turn my glory
into shame ?
How long will ye love vanity, and seek after
leasing ?
- 3 But know that the Lord hath set apart him that
is godly for himself :
The Lord will hear when I call unto Him.
- 4 Stand in awe, and sin not :

- Commune with your own heart
Upon your bed, and be still.
5 Offer the sacrifices of righteousness,
And put your trust in the Lord.

(III. *God's favour our happiness and safety.*)

- 6 There be many that say, "Who will shew us any
good?"
Lord, lift Thou up the light of Thy countenance
upon us.
7 Thou hast put gladness in my heart,
More than in the time that their corn and their
wine increased.
8 I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep:
For Thou, Lord, only makest me to dwell in safety.

REFLECTIONS.

We may here learn,

1. That when good men pray, they feel their need of mercy; they thankfully acknowledge God's former goodness to them; and they are anxious that their prayer should be heard, accepted, and answered.
2. That good men expostulate with the wicked, and give them sound advice. The wicked laugh at piety, and love vanity and falsehood. They will do well to consider, that the godly are the Lord's peculiar people, whose prayer He hears. They will do well to pause, to examine themselves, to turn to God, and to worship Him and trust in Him.
3. That the wicked scoff, as if religion did nothing for its disciples; but that God manifests His favour

to His faithful servants, puts gladness into their hearts, and keeps them in peace and safety. The good may be tried and afflicted; but they are happy in God's favour, and safe in God's protection.

PRAYER.

O Lord, do Thou always hear our prayers, and give us strength and consolation. May we examine ourselves, renounce all sin, worship Thee in spirit and in truth, trust in Thy mercy, grace, and power, and rejoice in Thee and in Thy salvation, through Jesus Christ our Redeemer. Amen.

PSALM V.

Prayer, as Psalm iv. The author, David; written perhaps on the same occasion as the preceding Psalm. A Morning Hymn.

(I. *Prayer.*)

- 1 Give ear to my words, O Lord,
Consider my meditation.
- 2 Hearken unto the voice of my cry, my King and
my God:
For unto Thee will I pray.
- 3 My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord;
In the morning, will I direct my prayer unto
Thee, and will look up.

(II. *God's hatred of sin.*)

- 4 For Thou art not a God that hath pleasure in
wickedness:
Neither shall evil dwell with Thee.
- 5 The foolish shall not stand in Thy sight:

Thou hatest all workers of iniquity.

- 6 Thou shalt destroy them that speak leasing :
The Lord will abhor the bloody and deceitful man.

(III. *A resolve : a petition.*)

- 7 But as for me, I will come into Thy house in the
multitude of Thy mercy :
And in Thy fear will I worship toward Thy holy
temple.
8 Lead me, O Lord, in Thy righteousness because of
mine enemies ;
Make Thy way straight before my face.

(IV. *Character and punishment of the wicked.*)

- 9 For there is no faithfulness in their mouth ;
Their inward part is very wickedness ;
Their throat is an open sepulchre ;
They flatter with their tongue.
10 Destroy Thou them, O God ;
Let them fall by their own counsels ;
Cast them out in the multitude of their trans-
gressions ;
For they have rebelled against Thee.

(V. *Happiness and safety of the good.*)

- 11 But let those that put their trust in Thee rejoice :
Let them ever shout for joy, because Thou de-
fendest them :
Let them also that love Thy name be joyful in
Thee.
12 For Thou, Lord, wilt bless the righteous ;
With favour wilt Thou compass him as with a
shield.

REFLECTIONS.

1. How earnest is the Psalmist in prayer ! We shall do well to copy him both as to his spirit, and as to the time of his devotion. We should be careful to begin every day with God, in order that we may spend the whole of it under His blessing and to His glory.

2. God's holiness is a subject never to be forgotten. He abhors wickedness : and how awful will be the end of the impenitent and disobedient ! O that we may delight in holiness and righteousness, and hate all iniquity.

3. In order to be kept from sin, to be holy, and to please God, what must we do ? Resolve as the Psalmist resolved, and pray as he prayed. If we would prosper in piety, we must worship God in His house of prayer, and we must continually seek divine guidance and protection.

4. How dark is the character, and how awful is the end of the ungodly ! Oh, what has sin wrought in the heart and conduct of man ! Oh, how dreadful is that destruction which is the wages of sin !

5. How delightful is it to turn to those who are partakers of divine grace ! What are their principles ? Faith and love : by these they walk before God in holiness and obedience. What is their happiness ? God is their Defender ; they enjoy His favour ; and they rejoice in Him.

PRAYER.

Give us, O Lord, praying hearts ; and may we

begin all our days with Thee. May we hate iniquity; worship Thee in thine ordinances; and seek Thy guidance. Have mercy upon the ungodly, and turn them from their evil ways, that sin may not be their ruin. Bless and defend us, and all Thy people, and may we rejoice in Thee, both now and ever, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PSALM VI.

DAY 1.] EVENING PRAYER.

Penitential. The author, David: the occasion, probably, the matter of Uriah. It is the language of a true penitent.

(I. Prayer.)

- 1 O Lord, rebuke me not in Thine anger,
Neither chasten me in Thy hot displeasure.
- 2 Have mercy upon me, O Lord; for I am weak:
O Lord, heal me; for my bones are vexed:
- 3 My soul is also sore vexed:
But Thou, O Lord, how long?
- 4 Return, O Lord, deliver my soul:
O save me for Thy mercies' sake.
- 5 For in death there is no remembrance of Thee:
In the grave who shall give Thee thanks?

(II. Complaint.)

- 6 I am weary with my groaning;
All the night make I my bed to swim;
I water my couch with my tears.
- 7 Mine eye is consumed because of grief;
It waxeth old because of all mine enemies.

(III. Prayer heard and answered.)

- 8 Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity ;
For the Lord hath heard the voice of my weeping.
9 The Lord hath heard my supplication ;
The Lord will receive my prayer.
10 Let all mine enemies be ashamed and sore vexed :
Let them return and be ashamed suddenly.

REFLECTIONS.

1. Consider the prayer of the penitent. He is in distress ; in deep spiritual affliction. He sees himself exposed to God's anger and displeasure. He prays that he may be graciously dealt with ; he prays for mercy, for spiritual health, for salvation, for restoration to God's favour. He pleads his cause : there is " no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither " he goes.

2. Consider his complaint. His grief is intense, and exhausts his powers of body and mind. His enemies are many and strong. What a slight thing is repentance in the view of many ! What a deep and serious thing it is in reality !

3. Consider the relief of the penitent. His prayer is heard ; his enemies are vanquished ; his soul is restored to comfort and peace.

PRAYER.

Give us, O Lord, the grace of unfeigned and deep repentance. Give us humble and contrite hearts, that we may mourn before Thee, pray unto Thee, and receive from Thee the consolations of Thy mercy and

grace according to the Gospel of Christ, that we may rejoice in Thy salvation, through the same Thy Son Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

PSALM VII.

Prayer for divine help in consideration of Integrity: the author, David: the occasion, the persecutions of Saul; or the reproaches of Shimei.

(I. *Prayer.*)

- 1 O Lord my God, in Thee do I put my trust:
Save me from all that persecute me, and deliver me:
- 2 Lest he tear my soul like a lion,
Tearing it in pieces, while there is none to deliver.

(II. *Profession of Innocence.*)

- 3 O Lord my God, if I have done this;
If there be iniquity in my hands;
- 4 If I have rewarded evil unto him that was at peace with me;
(Yea, I have delivered him that without cause is mine enemy:)
- 5 Let the enemy persecute my soul, and take it;
Yea, let him tread down my life upon the earth,
And lay mine honour in the dust.

(III. *Prayer for divine interposition.*)

- 6 Arise, O Lord, in Thine anger,
Lift up Thyself because of the rage of mine enemies:
And awake for me to the judgment which Thou hast commanded.

- 7 So shall the congregation of the people compass
Thee about :
For their sakes therefore return Thou on high.
- 8 The Lord shall judge the people :
Judge me, O Lord, according to my righteousness,
And according to mine integrity that is in me.
- 9 O let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end ;
But establish the just :
For the righteous Lord trieth the hearts and
reins.
- 10 My defence is of God,
Which saveth the upright in heart.

(IV. *Divine Judgments against sinners.*)

- 11 God judgeth the righteous,
And God is angry with the wicked every day.
- 12 If he turn not, He will whet His sword ;
He hath bent His bow, and made it ready.
- 13 He hath also prepared for him the instruments
of death ;
He ordaineth His arrows against His persecutors.

(V. *Beginning, progress, and end of sin.*)

- 14 Behold, he travaileth with iniquity,
And hath conceived mischief,
And brought forth falsehood.
- 15 He made a pit, and digged it,
And is fallen into the ditch which he made.
- 16 His mischief shall return upon his own head,
And his violent dealing shall come down upon his
own pate.

(VI. *Praise.*)

17 I will praise the Lord according to His righteousness:

And will sing praise to the name of the Lord most High.

REFLECTIONS.

1. A good man may be exposed to the violence and cruelty of persecuting enemies; but if he look to God in faith and prayer, he shall find safety and deliverance.

2. Happy is he who has a conscience void of offence towards all men! He can approach God, and plead his cause before Him, with comfort and confidence.

3. The good man, when he is persecuted and calumniated, implores God's merciful interposition on his behalf. In so doing, he regards God's glory and the good of others. He prays that he himself may be vindicated; that wickedness may be discomfited; and that the cause of the righteous may be established. He is fully persuaded that God, who knows the deepest thoughts of man's mind, is the righteous Judge; and he confides in Him as the defender and deliverer of the upright in heart.

4. The persecutors and calumniators of the godly ought to remember, that God is a righteous Judge, that He is angry with the wicked, and that unless they turn to Him in repentance He will visit them with awful destruction.

5. Here is the history of sin. Thus St. James

speaks : " When lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin : and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." Even in this world, the devices of the wicked against others often bring ruin upon themselves. He who would escape destruction at last, must beware of sin in the heart ; for if it lodge there, it cannot fail to produce its fruits and harvest.

6. We may be fully persuaded of God's righteousness, and make it the matter of praise and thanksgiving. The day will arrive when it will be fully manifested. Meanwhile we walk by faith : and if our faith be strong, our comfort will abound in an evil world.

PRAYER.

Enable us, O Lord, to walk before Thee with upright hearts : and whatever be our troubles, may we commit ourselves and our cause to Thee, with a full persuasion of Thy righteous conduct, and that Thou art the defence of Thy people. Convince the ungodly of their sin and folly, and turn them from their evil ways. May we, and all Thy people, guard against sin both in heart and conduct ; proceed in the way of righteousness ; and evermore praise Thy Name, O Lord most High, through Jesus Christ our Redeemer and Advocate. Amen.

PSALM VIII.

Psalm displaying the divine perfections. David asserts the glory of God, as it is seen in His works and in His love to man. From Heb. ii. 6—9, we learn that this Psalm refers to Christ.

1 O Lord our Lord,

How excellent is Thy name in all the earth !

- Who hast set Thy glory above the heavens.
- 2 Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings
Thou hast ordained strength because of Thine
enemies,
That Thou mightest still the enemy and the
avenger.
- 3 When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy
fingers,
The moon and the stars, which Thou hast ordained ;
- 4 What is man, that Thou art mindful of him ?
And the son of man, that Thou visitest him ?
- 5 For Thou hast made him a little lower than the
angels,
And hast crowned him with glory and honour.
- 6 Thou madest him to have dominion over the works
of Thy hands ;
Thou hast put all things under his feet.
- 7 All sheep and oxen,
Yea, and the beasts of the field ;
- 8 The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea,
And whatsoever passeth through the paths of the
seas.
- 9 O Lord our Lord,
How excellent is Thy Name in all the earth !

REFLECTIONS.

The excellence of Jehovah's name, the perfection which it describes, is known upon earth. His glory is above the heavens : it is infinite. But tender children may lisp His praise, and put His enemies to silence and confusion. While we think of the sky above us,

and of the luminaries of day and night, how can we sufficiently admire the divine goodness to us; which is seen in His care for us, in the nature which He has given us, and in the rank which we occupy, as spectators of His works, and as lords of all the creatures around us! Surely we ought to praise Him for such distinguishing goodness.

But we here behold our blessed Redeemer. We see Him in His humiliation and exaltation. This is the stupendous proof of the divine goodness. God has remembered us in our low and lost state, and visited us with salvation.

PRAYER.

O Lord, may we, in the light of Thy word, and by the power of Thy Spirit, truly know our Saviour, the world in which we live, and ourselves. Pour Thy grace upon our children, that they may speak Thy praise. Pour Thy grace upon us and upon all mankind, that the excellence of Thy Name, Thy glory and perfection, may be acknowledged and celebrated in all the earth, through Jesus Christ our only Saviour. Amen

PSALM IX.

DAY 2.]

MORNING PRAYER.

Instructive, as Psalm i. Probably composed by David to celebrate his victories over the neighbouring nations. 2 *Sam.* viii. 2—12.

(I. *Praise.*)

1 I will praise Thee, O Lord, with my whole heart;

I will show forth all Thy marvellous works.

2 I will be glad and rejoice in Thee :

I will sing praise to Thy Name, O Thou most High.

(II. *Enemies vanquished.*)

3 When mine enemies are turned back,

They shall fall and perish at Thy presence.

4 For Thou hast maintained my right and my cause ;
Thou satest in the throne judging right.

5 Thou hast rebuked the heathen,

Thou hast destroyed the wicked,

Thou hast put out their name for ever and ever.

6 O thou enemy, destructions are come to a perpetual end :

And thou hast destroyed cities ;

Their memorial is perished with them.

(III. *The justice and goodness of God.*)

7 But the Lord shall endure for ever :

He hath prepared His throne for judgment.

8 And He shall judge the world in righteousness,

He shall minister judgment to the people in uprightness.

9 The Lord also will be a refuge for the oppressed,
A refuge in times of trouble.

10 And they that know Thy Name will put their trust in Thee :

For Thou, Lord, hast not forsaken them that seek Thee.

(IV. *Praise and Prayer.*)

11 Sing praises to the Lord, which dwelleth in Zion :
Declare among the people His doings.

- 12 When He maketh inquisition for blood, He remembereth them :
He forgetteth not the cry of the humble.
- 13 Have mercy upon me, O Lord ;
Consider my trouble which I suffer of them that hate me,
Thou that liftest me up from the gates of death :
- 14 That I may show forth all Thy praise
In the gates of the daughter of Zion :
I will rejoice in Thy salvation.

(V. *The End of the Wicked, &c.*)

- 15 The heathen are sunk down in the pit that they made :
In the net which they hid is their own foot taken.
- 16 The Lord is known by the judgment which he executeth :
The wicked is ensnared in the work of his own hands.
- 17 The wicked shall be turned into hell,
And all the nations that forget God.
- 18 For the needy shall not alway be forgotten :
The expectation of the poor shall not perish for ever.

(VI. *Prayer.*)

- 19 Arise, O Lord ; let not man prevail :
Let the heathen be judged in Thy sight.
- 20 Put them in fear, O Lord :
That the nations may know themselves to be but men.

REFLECTIONS.

We may observe,

1. That the marvellous works of God, all His gra-

cious dealings with us, are matter for our joy and gladness; for praise and thanksgiving: and praise is not only to engage our lips, but our whole heart.

2. That many of the powers which opposed divine truth have perished, and those which now oppose it shall perish. God is a righteous Judge: and whether we regard nations, cities, or individuals, the destruction of the wicked is an event which will take place. He will blot out the remembrance of them, and maintain, and render prosperous, the cause of His servants.

3. That the justice and goodness of God are points on which we ought to be fully persuaded: His justice, for He will judge the world in righteousness; His goodness, for He will not forsake His people, but be their Defender and Comforter in times of trouble. Be it our study and prayer to know God, and to put our trust in Him.

4. That a just sense of God's justice and goodness will lead to praise and prayer. Although the righteous be persecuted even to death, they and their prayers shall be remembered. Well, therefore, may we sing praises to the Lord, and declare His doings.—But we are sufferers on earth; at times brought perhaps into great affliction, into great trouble and danger: and in such seasons, what better can we do than pray for the divine mercy and favour? Then we shall publicly praise God, and rejoice in His salvation.

5. That the righteousness and goodness of God shall be seen in the destruction of the wicked, and in the fulfilment of the hopes of the humble. How awful

will be the end of the ungodly ! Even here their stratagems and works may turn to their own confusion : and hell will be the portion of all who forget God. On the contrary, the faith and patience of the righteous may be tried ; but they are blessed here and hereafter.

6. That, in a world of sin and confusion, we are to pray to God to put forth His power, to restrain the wicked, to fill their hearts with salutary fear, and to humble their pride.

PRAYER.

Give us grace, O Lord, to consider Thy righteousness and goodness, Thy power and faithfulness. Inspire us with a hatred of sin ; and keep us from the ways, and preserve us from the power, of the ungodly. Make us patient in all our troubles and afflictions, looking to the end of all things. Being fully persuaded of Thy righteous and gracious dealings, while we pray for Thy mercy and protection, may we also abound in joy and gladness, and praise Thee with our whole heart. Grant this, we beseech Thee, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

PSALM X.

Instructive, as Psalm i. Some ascribe this Psalm to David ; others, to a writer during the Babylonish Captivity. Psalms x. xii. xiv. xxxv. liii. are very similar.

(I. *The wicked described.*)

- 1 Why standest Thou afar off, O Lord ?
Why hidest Thou Thyself in times of trouble ?
- 2 The wicked in his pride doth persecute the poor :

Let them be taken in the devices that they have imagined.

- 3 For the wicked boasteth of his heart's desire,
And blesseth the covetous, whom the Lord abhorreth.
- 4 The wicked, through the pride of his countenance,
will not seek after God :
God is not in all his thoughts.
- 5 His ways are always grievous ;
Thy judgments are far above out of his sight :
As for all his enemies, he puffeth at them.
- 6 He hath said in his heart, "I shall not be moved :
"For I shall never be in adversity."
- 7 His mouth is full of cursing, and deceit, and fraud :
Under his tongue is mischief and vanity.
- 8 He sitteth in the lurking places of the villages :
In the secret places doth he murder the innocent :
His eyes are privily set against the poor.
- 9 He lieth in wait secretly, as a lion in his den :
He lieth in wait to catch the poor :
He doth catch the poor, when he draweth him
into his net.
- 10 He croucheth, and humbleth himself,
That the poor may fall by his strong ones.
- 11 He hath said in his heart, "God hath forgotten :
"He hideth His face ; He will never see it."

(II. *Prayer for Deliverance.*)

- 12 Arise, O Lord ; O God, lift up Thy hand :
Forget not the humble.
- 13 Wherefore doth the wicked contemn God ?
He hath said in his heart, "Thou wilt not require it."

- 14 Thou hast seen it; for Thou beholdest mischief
And spite, to requite it with Thy hand :
The poor committeth himself unto Thee ;
Thou art the Helper of the fatherless.
- 15 Break Thou the arm of the wicked and the evil
man :
Seek out his wickedness till Thou find none.

(III. *Confidence in God.*)

- 16 The Lord is King for ever and ever :
The heathen are perished out of His land.
- 17 Lord, Thou hast heard the desire of the humble :
Thou wilt prepare their heart,
Thou wilt cause Thine ear to hear :
- 18 To judge the fatherless and the oppressed,
That the man of the earth may no more oppress.

REFLECTIONS.

Observe,

1. What a dark picture is here given us of ungodly men ! What a painful object for our contemplation is man destitute of divine grace ! Pride, cruelty, rapacity, hypocrisy, insolence, and impiety, are some of the frightful features of his character. Into what a monster has sin changed a creature made originally in the divine likeness ! How thankful ought we to be for laws and government, by which the passions of men are put under some restraint ! What miserable and vile beings should we be, if we were left to ourselves ! How greatly do we always stand in need of the divine mercy and grace !

2. The refuge of the pious. They look to God in

faith and prayer ; knowing that His eye sees all things ; that He will break the power of the wicked, and punish them ; and that He is the defender and helper of all, however weak and destitute, who commit themselves to Him in faith.

3. Faith and prayer soon lead to peace and confidence. Despondency yields to the assurance that God is the everlasting King, who hears His people, subdues their enemies, and causes them to know that they have a Father and Deliverer.

PRAYER.

In a world of sin and trouble, may we always look up to Thee, O God, and call upon Thy Name: by Thee may we be kept from wickedness and the wicked: and by Thee may we be preserved, guided, and comforted in all our ways; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PSALM XI.

Instructive, as Psalm i. Probably written by David when he was advised to flee from Saul.

(I. *Confidence in God.*)

- 1 In the Lord put I my trust:
How say ye to my soul,
Flee as a bird to your mountain?
- 2 For, lo, the wicked bend their bow,
They make ready their arrow upon the string,
That they may privily shoot at the upright in heart.

- 3 If the foundations be destroyed,
What can the righteous do?

(II. *The providence and justice of God.*)

- 4 The Lord is in His holy temple,
The Lord's throne is in heaven :
His eyes behold,
His eyelids try, the children of men.
- 5 The Lord trieth the righteous :
But the wicked, and him that loveth violence, his
soul hateth.
- 6 Upon the wicked He shall rain snares, fire and
brimstone,
And a horrible tempest : this shall be the portion
of their cup.
- 7 For the righteous Lord loveth righteousness :
His countenance doth behold the upright.

REFLECTIONS.

1. The words and advice of those who look only to outward appearances may often form one of the Christian's trials, and tend to discourage him, to shake his faith, and to increase his distress. They say to him, "Flee; the foundations fail; the building is going to ruin. The enemy is near in a formidable array." What shall he say in reply? "In the Lord put I my trust." Trust in God is the strength and repose of the soul.

2. Here is the full persuasion and the genuine language of a true faith. The Lord is King upon the throne above; He sees all things; He knows and loves His faithful people; He hates the wicked, and, when

the day of His patience ends, He will pour upon them, as upon Sodom and Gomorrah, the vials of His wrath.

PRAYER.

Thou, O Lord, art the righteous Lord, and Thou lovest righteousness: Thou lookest upon Thine upright servants with favour and loving-kindness. Whatever may be the confusion and trouble of the present state, may we trust in Thee; knowing that Thou seest all things, and rulest over all, and wilt punish evil-doers. And as Thou art our confidence and support, may we study to please and glorify Thee in all our ways; through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

PSALM XII.

DAY 2.]

EVENING PRAYER.

Instructive, as Psalm i. Author, David. Some refer it to the persecutions of Saul; others, to those of Absalom.

(I. *Prayer and complaint.*)

- 1 Help, Lord; for the godly man ceaseth;
For the faithful fail from among the children of men.
- 2 They speak vanity every one with his neighbour:
With flattering lips and with a double heart do they speak.

(II. *Judgments on the wicked; safety of the good.*)

- 3 The Lord shall cut off all flattering lips,
And the tongue that speaketh proud things:
- 4 Who have said, "With our tongue will we prevail;
"Our lips are our own; who is Lord over us?"

- 5 For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy,
Now will I arise, saith the Lord;
I will set him in safety from him that puffeth at him.

(III. *Confidence in God.*)

- 6 The words of the Lord are pure words:
As silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times.
- 7 Thou shalt keep them, O Lord;
Thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever.
- 8 The wicked walk on every side,
When the vilest men are exalted.

REFLECTIONS.

1. When the good and faithful among men seem to be few; when vanity, flattery, and duplicity abound; to whom but to God shall we look for help? In all cases we may resort to Him as our preserver and guide.

2. Faith delights to contemplate the government of God; the justice of His proceedings. Flattery, pride, and insolent impiety may prevail, and occasion much confusion and misery, for a season. But the sighing of the needy is heard, and the oppression of the poor is seen, by the just and holy God; and He will arise when he sees proper, vindicate their cause, and place them in safety. Such, whatever be their condition here, will be the final issue of things.

3. The word of God is pure, true, and faithful; free from all dross of error and deceit; proved by the ex-

perience of the pious in all circumstances and through all ages. If the vile be exalted, and the wicked walk on every side, yet the word of God shall be fulfilled and the righteous shall be preserved. Their help never fails.

PRAYER.

In an evil world, and in evil days, grant, O Lord, that we may look to Thee in faith. Whatever be the flattery of some, or the violence of others; however pride, impiety, and injustice may abound in the earth; may we look to Thee for help and preservation; wait patiently for deliverance; trust in the fulfilment of Thy word; and never be weary of well doing. Grant this, we beseech Thee, for our Redeemer's sake. Amen.

PSALM XIII.

Prayer in great dejection under affliction: probably written by David during the persecutions of Saul.

(I. *Complaint.*)

- 1 How long wilt Thou forget me, O Lord? for ever?
How long wilt Thou hide Thy face from me?
- 2 How long shall I take counsel in my soul,
Having sorrow in my heart daily?
How long shall mine enemy be exalted over me?

(II. *Prayer.*)

- 3 Consider, and hear me, O Lord my God:
Lighten mine eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death;
- 4 Lest mine enemy say, "I have prevailed against him;"

And those that trouble me rejoice when I am moved.

(III. *The joys of faith.*)

- 5 But I have trusted in Thy mercy;
My heart shall rejoice in Thy salvation.
6 I will sing unto the Lord,
Because He hath dealt bountifully with me.

REFLECTIONS.

1. We lament, in cloudy and dark days, the concealment of the sun. How much more does the Christian lament the absence of the bright shining of the Sun of righteousness! Spiritual troubles are felt by him to be exceedingly painful; when he seems to be forgotten of God; when his meditations afford him no comfort; when he has sorrow in his heart daily; and when his enemies seem to prevail. Such seasons there are in the spiritual life.

2. The relief of the Christian is this, he can approach God at the throne of grace, fill his mouth with arguments, and pour out his heart before Him. This David did; and this is what we ought to do: for thus shall we be enlightened and preserved; and thus the designs and expectations of our enemies will be frustrated.

3. He who trusts in the mercy of God in Christ Jesus, and devoutly prays to Him, shall soon rejoice in the blessings of redemption. The complaint of darkness, desertion, and sorrow will then be exchanged for the song of gratitude and gladness, because God has dealt bountifully with him.

PRAYER.

Preserve us, O Lord, in all our troubles, from despondency. In the season of darkness and sorrow, when we have no light, may we trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon our God. May we call upon Thee in earnest prayer, and proceed in our Christian course with faith and patience; persuaded that in due time thou wilt deal bountifully with us, and cause our hearts to rejoice in Thy salvation. Mercifully hear our requests for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

PSALM XIV.

Instructive, as Ps. i. The Psalmist, perhaps David, complains of the corruption of men, and of the oppressors of the people whom he could not restrain. See Ps. liii.

(I. *Corruption of the world.*)

- 1 The fool hath said in his heart, "There is no God."
They are corrupt, they have done abominable works,
There is none that doeth good.
- 2 The Lord looked down from heaven
upon the children of men,
To see if there were any that did understand,
and seek God.
- 3 There is none that doeth good, no, not one.

(II. *Enmity of the wicked.*)

- 4 Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge?
Who eat up my people as they eat bread,
And call not upon the Lord.
- 5 There were they in great fear:

For God is in the generation of the righteous.

- 6 Ye have shamed the counsel of the poor,
Because the Lord is his refuge.

(III. *Prayer.*)

- 7 Oh that the salvation of Israel were come out of
Zion !

When the Lord bringeth back the captivity of His
people,
Jacob shall rejoice, and Israel shall be glad.

REFLECTIONS.

1. Practical atheism, depravity of mind and heart, wicked works, lack of understanding, cruelty, and neglect of devotion, are the dark features in the picture which is here set before us of our fallen nature. The evil is universal; all are wanderers; all are filthy. How has sin defaced the image in which man was created ! How ought we to humble ourselves before God as guilty and depraved creatures, and thankfully receive the salvation which the Gospel offers ! Rom. iii. 10, &c.

2. "Marvel not if the world hate you." But why should we be troubled or dismayed at the enmity of the wicked ! They often feel terror now : and what will they feel when they stand before God in judgment ? But God is always with His people ; and although He may suffer them to be persecuted and derided here on account of their piety, it shall be seen at last that they choose the good part.

3. How earnestly did the Jews at Babylon desire restoration to their own land ! The captivity was pain-

ful; and great was their gladness when they returned to Zion. O, how great will be the joy of the whole Church, when the slavery and sufferings of time will be forgotten in the liberty and bliss of eternity! For this salvation we pray, when we say, "Thy kingdom come."

PRAYER.

Convince us, O Lord, of our sinfulness and guilt; and may we so believe in Christ as to be freely justified by Thy grace through the redemption that is in Him. Preserve us in an evil world from all our enemies; and by patient continuance in well doing, may we seek for glory and honour and immortality, and finally obtain eternal life, through the merits of our blessed and only Redeemer. Amen.

PSALM XV.

DAY 3.]

MORNING PRAYER.

Instructive, as Psalm i. David, the ark having been removed to Zion, describes the duties of the inhabitants of Jerusalem. We here see the Citizen of Zion, the practical Christian.

- 1 Lord, who shall abide in Thy tabernacle?
Who shall dwell in Thy holy hill?
- 2 He that walketh uprightly,
And worketh righteousness,
And speaketh the truth in his heart.
- 3 He that backbiteth not with his tongue,
Nor doeth evil to his neighbour,
Nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour.

- 4 In whose eyes a vile person is contemned ;
 But he honoureth them that fear the Lord.
 He that sweareth to His own hurt, and changeth not.
- 5 He that putteth not out his money to usury,
 Nor taketh reward against the innocent.
 He that doeth these things shall never be moved.

REFLECTIONS.

We have here an important question. Who is the true worshipper of God below, and who shall be received into the mansions of glory and bliss above?

We have an explicit answer. It is true, that we must examine our views, principles, and affections ; for the tree must be made good before its fruit can be good. And then it is true, that we judge of the tree by its fruits. If we love God, we shall walk uprightly and produce the fruit of good works, according to the requirements of His holy word. If we love our neighbour, we shall do no evil to him ; use no deceit towards him ; utter no reproach against him ; use no extortion with him ; and never betray the cause of the guiltless. We shall fulfil our engagements, even at our own loss. We shall make a marked distinction between the vile and those that fear God. In such things we see what practical piety is ; and if we thus prove and adorn our pious principles by corresponding practice, we shall never be moved.

PRAYER.

Grant us grace, O Lord, to prove and examine our hearts and lives. Grant us, through the operation of Thy Holy Spirit, that true and living faith which will

lead us to do Thy will in all things: and may we, as doers of the work, be blessed in our deed. While we believe in Christ as the way and the truth and the life, may we follow His example and keep His commandments, and finally through Him obtain everlasting happiness. Amen.

PSALM XVI.

Prophetical. The author, David: whatever was the occasion of this Psalm, our blessed Lord, Acts ii. 25—31., is the chief subject of it.

(I. *Prayer: personal merit disclaimed.*)

- 1 Preserve me, O God:
For in Thee do I put my trust.
- 2 O my soul,
Thou hast said unto the Lord, Thou art my
Lord:
My goodness extendeth not to Thee;
- 3 But to the saints that are in the earth,
And to the excellent in whom is all my delight.

(II. *Protestation against idolaters.*)

- 4 Their sorrows shall be multiplied that hasten after
another god:
Their drink offerings of blood will I not offer,
Nor take up their name into my lips.

(III. *Gratitude and Confidence.*)

- 5 The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance and of
my cup:
Thou maintainest my lot.
- 6 The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places;

Yea, I have a goodly heritage.

- 7 I will bless the Lord, who hath given me counsel:
My reins also instruct me in the night seasons.

(IV. *Hope in the resurrection.*)

- 8 I have set the Lord always before me:
Because He is at my right hand, I shall not be
moved.
- 9 Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory re-
joiceth:
My flesh also shall rest in hope.
- 10 For Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell,
Neither wilt Thou suffer Thy Holy One to see
corruption.
- 11 Thou wilt shew me the path of life;
In Thy presence is fulness of joy;
At Thy right hand there are pleasures for ever-
more.

REFLECTIONS.

1. A good man trusts in God, and prays for preservation. "Thou art my Lord"—is the language of his soul: but he has the humblest view of those good works which he does, which claim nothing from God, but are for the benefit of the saints and excellent on earth, in whom the good man delights, and whose happiness and welfare he endeavours to promote.

2. A good man resolves to keep far from the wicked and their abominations, who, adhering to many vanities, prepare for themselves the keenest sorrows.

3. A good man knows his privileges, and is thankful for them. He looks to God as his portion, defender,

and teacher; the bountiful giver of all the good that he enjoys: and in the silent hours of the night he employs his mind in holy meditation, and obtains wisdom. Such is the blessedness that we should seek to enjoy.

4. A good man sets the Lord always before him; remembers His presence; trusts in Him; and therefore he shall not be moved. He rejoices: he goes down to the grave in hope: for knowing Him who is "the resurrection and the life," he looks with holy and happy assurance to a blessed immortality.

How far the whole Psalm relates to our blessed Lord, it may be difficult to determine. But we have the highest authority for seeing Him in the last portion of it: for He, and no other, is the Holy One who did not see corruption. He looked "to the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

PRAYER.

Enable us, O Lord, to trust in Thee; to abound in good works; to be truly humble; to keep far from the errors and corruptions of the wicked; and always to rejoice in Thy goodness to us. Make us thankful for all the blessings conferred upon us; and be Thou our portion, defender, and instructor. May we live in the faith, and die in the faith, of our Lord Jesus Christ: and, through the redemption which He wrought out for us; may we here walk in the path of life, and be finally exalted to that state where "in Thy presence is fulness

of joy," and where "at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore." Grant this, we beseech Thee, for our Redeemer's sake. Amen.

PSALM XVII.

Prayer, as Psalm vii. David probably wrote this Psalm when Saul had carried his persecution to the highest pitch.

(I. Prayer grounded on Integrity.)

- 1 Hear the right, O Lord, attend unto my cry;
Give ear unto my prayer, that goeth not out of
feigned lips.
- 2 Let my sentence come forth from Thy presence;
Let thine eyes behold the things that are equal.
- 3 Thou hast proved my heart;
Thou hast visited me in the night;
Thou hast tried me, and shalt find nothing;
I am purposed that my mouth shall not transgress.
- 4 Concerning the works of men,
By the word of Thy lips I have kept me from the
paths of the destroyer.

(II. Prayer for divine protection.)

- 5 Hold up my goings in Thy paths,
That my footsteps slip not.
- 6 I have called upon Thee,
For Thou wilt hear me, O God:
Incline Thine ear unto me, and hear my speech.
- 7 Shew me Thy marvellous lovingkindness,
O Thou that savest, by Thy right hand,
Them which put their trust in Thee,
From those that rise up against them.

- 8 Keep me as the apple of the eye ;
Hide me under the shadow of Thy wings,
9 From the wicked that oppress me,
From my deadly enemies, who compass me about.

(III. *Description of the wicked.*)

- 10 They are enclosed in their own fat :
With their mouth they speak proudly.
11 They have now compassed us in our steps :
They have set their eyes bowing down to the earth ;
12 Like as a lion that is greedy of his prey,
And as it were a young lion lurking in secret places.

(IV. *Prayer for deliverance.*)

- 13 Arise, O Lord, disappoint him, cast him down :
Deliver my soul from the wicked, which is Thy
sword :
14 From men which are Thy hand, O Lord,
From men of the world, which have their portion
in this life,
And whose belly Thou fillest with Thy hid treasure :
They are full of children,
And leave the rest of their substance to their babes.

(V. *An act of faith.*)

- 15 As for me, I will behold Thy face in righteousness :
I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with Thy like-
ness.

REFLECTIONS.

1. In Psalm vii. 3—5, we see the conscience void of offence towards man : here we see the conscience void of offence towards God. Such is the sound and upright heart, producing integrity of conduct; integrity

in words. Happy is the Christian who can thus look to God, and magnify Him for His grace. Happy is he who by God's word is kept from every evil way. With what joy and confidence can he always approach the throne of grace !

2. We have many deadly enemies ; our dangers are great ; and our own strength is weakness. Happy we, if we see and feel this ! Then we shall pray with all the heart for strength from above ; for divine guidance and protection ; and that we may fully experience the marvellous lovingkindness of our God and Saviour.

3. What an awful picture of the ungodly ! Enslaved by their appetites ; proud in their language ; mischievous in the devices in their hearts ; subtle, cruel, and rapacious in their conduct,—such are the operations and fruits of sin. What a monster does sin make man, when he is under its dominion !

4. God bestows many gifts on the wicked. He uses them as instruments to fulfil His purposes. They have their good things now. But what will be their final portion ? While we are exposed to their devices, or suffer from them, our prayer should be directed to Him who will frustrate their counsels, and grant us deliverance.

5. See the true believer in the full exercise of faith. He looks from the troubles of time to the joys of eternity. He looks to the day of the resurrection, when he shall awake, as to the body, from the sleep of the grave ; when in his flesh he shall see God, and

stand before Him in righteousness; shall behold His glory, and then through unending ages be satisfied with perfect bliss in the possession of a blessed and exalted conformity to Him. "When He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is."

PRAYER.

O blessed Lord God, with such a glorious prospect before us, may we patiently endure the sufferings of the present time. Grant that we may be "washed, justified, and sanctified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." Grant that we may be pure in heart and upright in conduct before Thee. Hear our prayers, uphold us in all our goings, and preserve us by Thy mighty power from every enemy. Thus may we, through Thy grace and goodness, live the life of the righteous, that our last end may be like his. Mercifully fulfil our petitions for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

PSALM XVIII.

DAY 3.]

EVENING PRAYER.

Thanksgivings for mercies granted to particular persons. Viewed literally, the Psalm is David's thanksgiving for benefits received. 2 Sam. xxii. Considered spiritually, it may be applied to Christ.

(I. *Praise.*)

- 1 I will love Thee, O Lord, my Strength.
- 2 The Lord is my rock, and my fortress,
And my deliverer; my God,
My strength, in whom I will trust;

My buckler, and the horn of my salvation,
And my high tower.

- 3 I will call upon the Lord,
Who is worthy to be praised ;
So shall I be saved from mine enemies.

(II. *Reference to Sufferings.*)

- 4 The sorrows of death compassed me,
And the floods of ungodly men made me afraid.
5 The sorrows of hell compassed me about ;
The snares of death prevented me.
6 In my distress I called upon the Lord,
And cried unto my God :
He heard my voice out of His temple,
And my cry came before Him, even unto His ears.

(III. *Divine Interposition.*)

- 7 Then the earth shook and trembled ;
The foundations also of the hills moved and were
shaken,
Because He was wroth.
8 There went up a smoke out of His nostrils,
And fire out of His mouth devoured :
Coals were kindled by it.
9 He bowed the heavens also, and came down :
And darkness was under His feet.
10 And He rode upon a cherub, and did fly :
Yea, He did fly upon the wings of the wind.
11 He made darkness His secret place ;
His pavilion round about Him were dark waters
And thick clouds of the skies.
12 At the brightness that was before Him His thick
clouds passed,

Hail stones and coals of fire.

- 13 The Lord also thundered in the heavens,
And the Highest gave His voice ;
Hail stones and coals of fire.

- 14 Yea, He sent out His arrows, and scattered them ;
And He shot out lightnings, and discomfited them.

- 15 Then the channels of waters were seen,
And the foundations of the world were discovered,
At Thy rebuke, O Lord,
At the blast of the breath of Thy nostrils.

(IV. *Deliverance.*)

- 16 He sent from above, He took me,
He drew me out of many waters.

- 17 He delivered me from my strong enemy,
And from them which hated me :
For they were too strong for me.

- 18 They prevented me in the day of my calamity :
But the Lord was my stay.

- 19 He brought me forth also into a large place ;
He delivered me, because He delighted in me.

(V. *Integrity.*)

- 20 The Lord rewarded me according to my righteousness ;

According to the cleanness of my hands hath He
recompensed me.

- 21 For I have kept the ways of the Lord,
And have not wickedly departed from my God.

- 22 For all His judgments were before me,
And I did not put away His statutes from me.

- 23 I was also upright before Him,
And I kept myself from mine iniquity.

- 24 Therefore hath the Lord recompensed me,
* According to my righteousness,
According to the cleanness of my hands in His
eye-sight.

(VI. *Equity and Goodness of God.*)

- 25 With the merciful Thou wilt shew Thyself merciful;
With an upright man Thou wilt shew Thyself up-
right;
26 With the pure Thou wilt shew Thyself pure;
And with the froward Thou wilt shew Thyself
froward.

- 27 For Thou wilt save the afflicted people;
But wilt bring down high looks.
28 For Thou wilt light my candle:
The Lord my God will enlighten my darkness.

(VII. *Glory of the victory ascribed to God.*)

- 29 For by Thee I have run through a troop;
And by my God have I leaped over a wall.
30 As for God, His way is perfect:
The word of the Lord is tried:
He is a buckler to all those that trust in Him.
31 For who is God save the Lord?
Or who is a rock save our God?
32 It is God that girdeth me with strength,
And maketh my way perfect.
33 He maketh my feet like hinds' feet,
And setteth me upon my high places.
34 He teacheth my hands to war,
So that a bow of steel is broken by mine arms.
35 Thou hast also given me the shield of Thy salva-
tion:

- And Thy right hand hath holden me up,
And Thy gentleness hath made me great.
36 Thou hast enlarged my steps under me,
That my feet did not slip.

(VIII. *Completeness of the victory.*)

- 37 I have pursued mine enemies, and overtaken them:
Neither did I turn again till they were consumed.
38 I have wounded them that they were not able to rise:
They are fallen under my feet.
39 For Thou hast girded me with strength unto the
battle :
Thou hast subdued under me those that rose up
against me.
40 Thou hast given me the necks of mine enemies ;
That I might destroy them that hate me.
41 They cried, but there was none to save them ;
Even unto the Lord, but He answered them not.
42 Then did I beat them small as the dust before the
wind :

I did cast them out as the dirt in the streets.

(IX. *Submission of the heathen.*)

- 43 Thou hast delivered me from the strivings of the
people ;
And Thou hast made me the head of the heathen :
A people whom I have not known shall serve me.
44 As soon as they hear of me, they shall obey me :
The strangers shall submit themselves unto me.
45 The strangers shall fade away,
And be afraid out of their close places.

(X. *Praise.*)

- 46 The Lord liveth ; and blessed be my rock ;

And let the God of my salvation be exalted.

47 It is God that avengeth me,

And subdueth the people unto me.

48 He delivereth me from mine enemies :

Yea, Thou liftest me up above those that rise up
against me :

Thou hast delivered me from the violent man.

49 Therefore will I give thanks unto Thee, O Lord,
among the heathen,

And sing praises unto Thy name.

50 Great deliverance giveth He to His king ;

And sheweth mercy to His anointed,

To David, and to his seed for evermore.

REFLECTIONS.

Observe here,

1. God is our strength: and if we love Him, trust in Him, and call upon Him, we shall be saved from all our enemies.

2. Many were the sufferings of Christ; many are those of His followers. After His example, the season of trial should be the season of prayer.

3. The prayer of faith is always heard and answered. Remember the Red Sea, and Sinai, and the resurrection of our Lord: there see the divine power and goodness. Surely the wicked have the greatest reason to fear; the good, to hope!

4. Our blessed Lord was delivered from His enemies. God is always the deliverer of His Church and people. If He delight in us, we shall be brought forth into a large place: our hearts shall be enlarged.

5. The righteous Lord loveth righteousness. Correct views are but of little value without correct conduct. Beware of all sin, and especially of the besetting sin. We must keep the law of God before us, and pray that we may never depart from it.

6. The ways of God are equal. He will bless the faithful and upright, and punish the perverse; save the humble, and debase the proud. He will give His people light in darkness. What encouragement to steadfast piety!

7. Victory is from God. The Church and every believer triumph through Him. He arms His people, endues them with might, supports them in conflict, and by His gentleness, His gracious conduct, makes them great, yea, more than conquerors. To Him be ascribed all the glory.

8. The triumph of Christ and of his Gospel will be complete: so will be that of every true believer. How awful is the end of the ungodly, when the day of wrath comes, and prayer is vain and perdition certain! O ye careless! turn to your God and Saviour before the day of salvation ends.

9. Here David rejoices in the extension of temporal dominion. Here Messiah rejoices in the extension of His spiritual kingdom. May we be His true subjects! Pray we for the establishment of His kingdom in the world, and in our own hearts.

10. Whether, in meditating on the victories of our Redeemer, we recall the past or anticipate the future, we ought to rejoice and magnify God for His good-

ness. He lives, and blessed be His name; He has done much: He will do more: He will subdue all nations.

O glorious and gracious Saviour, rule in all nations, and in all hearts. Subdue us, and subdue all things, to Thyself, that Thy praises may be celebrated by unnumbered voices both now and for evermore. Thus, we beseech Thee, be merciful to us for Thine own Name's sake. Amen.

PSALM XIX.

DAY 4.]

MORNING PRAYER.

Instructive: The excellence of God's Law. David teaches us how to contemplate Creation and Revelation.

(I. *Creation.*)

- 1 The heavens declare the glory of God;
And the firmament showeth His handy work.
- 2 Day unto day uttereth speech,
And night unto night showeth knowledge.
- 3 There is no speech nor language,
Where their voice is not heard.
- 4 Their line is gone out through all the earth,
And their words to the end of the world.
In them hath He set a tabernacle for the sun,
- 5 Which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber,
And rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race.
- 6 His going forth is from the end of the heaven,
And his circuit unto the ends of it:
And there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.

(II. *Revelation.*)

- 7 The Law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul

The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.

- 8 The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart:

The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes.

- 9 The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever:

The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.

- 10 More to be desired are they than gold,

Yea, than much fine gold:

Sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.

(III. *Prayer for mercy and grace.*)

- 11 Moreover by them is Thy servant warned:

And in keeping of them there is great reward.

- 12 Who can understand his errors?

Cleanse thou me from secret faults.

- 13 Keep back Thy servant also from presumptuous sins;

Let them not have dominion over me:

Then shall I be upright,

And I shall be innocent from the great transgression.

- 14 Let the words of my mouth,

And the meditation of my heart,

Be acceptable in Thy sight,

O Lord, my Strength, and my Redeemer.

REFLECTIONS.

1. The works of creation display the perfections of their Creator. Consider the sun, moon, and stars; the firmament; the wonders of day and night. All is silence: and yet all speaks to man. Particularly notice the sun, with its universal and unceasing influence,

gladdening, enlivening, and adorning the globes that roll around it as their centre. Here see the wisdom, power, and goodness of God. But,

2. Revelation gives us a far more glorious, ample, and gracious display of the divine perfections. Here we see the Sun of righteousness, who is the light and life of the world.—Meditate on the Law of the Lord; on all revealed truth: it is perfect, sure or faithful, right, pure, clean, true, and righteous.—Then see its influence: it converts the soul; makes us wise; rejoices the heart; enlightens us; and endures for ever. How ought we to value the Scriptures! How ought we to delight in them!

3. God's word is designed to warn us, to instruct us, and to make us happy in keeping or observing it. The proper study of it will lead us to discover our sinfulness and our sins; and to pray for pardon and sanctifying grace; for outward rectitude and inward holiness.

PRAYER.

O Blessed Jesus, Thou Sun of righteousness, our strength and our Redeemer; grant that we may so look to Thee, by a true faith, that we may be cleansed from our sins by Thy blood, and made new creatures by Thy Spirit; that we may live here in holiness and obedience, and finally, through Thee, obtain eternal blessedness. Amen.

PSALM XX.

Prayer of Intercession. The author, David: the occasion, unknown: sung when the Jews were going out to war.

(I. Prayer for the king.)

- 1 The Lord hear thee in the day of trouble;
The Name of the God of Jacob defend thee.
- 2 Send thee help from the sanctuary,
And strengthen thee out of Zion;
- 3 Remember all thy offerings,
And accept thy burnt sacrifice.
- 4 Grant thee according to thine own heart,
And fulfil all thy counsel.
- 5 We will rejoice in thy salvation,
And in the name of our God we will set up our
banners:
The Lord fulfil all thy petitions.
- 6 Now know I that the Lord saveth His anointed;
He will hear Him from His holy heaven
With the saving strength of His right hand.

(II. True and vain confidence.)

- 7 Some trust in chariots, and some in horses:
But we will remember the Name of the Lord our
God.
- 8 They are brought down and fallen;
But we are risen and stand upright.

(III. A petition.)

- 9 Save, Lord:
Let the king hear us when we call.

REFLECTIONS.

View the Psalm literally. We are to pray for

kings and all in authority. This world abounds with trouble and confusion. Many are the dangers and calamities to which nations are exposed. Arduous, and frequently perilous, are the labours which rulers have to undergo. We ought to think of our rulers; to feel and to pray for them; to reject all vain confidences; and to look to God as the Preserver of kings and of nations.

2. View the Psalm spiritually. It is our duty to pray, that our blessed Redeemer may be victorious in the world over all the powers of darkness; that the Gospel may prevail and prosper in all nations; and that we and all Christians may triumph in His Name over all our enemies, and rejoice in His salvation.

PRAYER.

Be Thou, O Lord, the defender of kings and rulers. Be Thou the Maintainer of Thine own cause—of the Gospel of Christ—in the world. Be Thou the Protector of Thine own people. May they renounce every vain trust, remember the name of the Lord our God, and rise and always stand upright. Graciously answer our petitions for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

PSALM XXI.

Psalm of Thanksgiving, as Psalm xviii. David probably wrote this Psalm after some victory. Many expressions in it seem to point to the Messiah.

(I. *Thanksgiving.*)

1 The king shall joy in Thy strength, O Lord; .

- And in Thy salvation how greatly shall he rejoice !
2 Thou hast given him his heart's desire,
And hast not withholden the request of his lips.
3 For Thou preventest him with the blessings of
goodness ;
Thou settest a crown of pure gold on his head.
4 He asked life of Thee, and Thou gavest it him,
Even length of days for ever and ever.
5 His glory is great in Thy salvation :
Honour and majesty hast Thou laid upon him.
6 For Thou hast made him most blessed for ever :
Thou hast made him exceeding glad with Thy
countenance.
7 For the king trusteth in the Lord,
And through the mercy of the Most High he shall
not be moved.

(II. *Assurance of further success.*)

- 8 Thine hand shall find out all Thine enemies :
Thy right hand shall find out those that hate Thee.
9 Thou shalt make them as a fiery oven in the time
of Thine anger :
The Lord shall swallow them up in His wrath,
And the fire shall devour them.
10 Their fruit shalt thou destroy from the earth,
And their seed from among the children of men.
11 For they intended evil against Thee :
They imagined a mischievous device,
Which they are not able to perform.
12 Therefore shalt Thou make them turn their back,
When Thou shalt make ready Thine arrows
Upon Thy strings against the face of them.

(III. *Prayer.*)

- 13 Be Thou exalted, Lord, in Thine own strength :
So will we sing and praise Thy power.

REFLECTIONS.

We may remark here,

1. That kings and the mighty of the earth ought to ascribe all success to God : by Him they rule, prosper, and enjoy safety. Happy are those rulers who trust in Him and in His mercy ; for they shall rejoice in His favour, and never be moved.

But we may here view Messiah, and see His exaltation and victories ; the cause, pattern, and pledge of our own. We dwell with delight on the stability and prosperity of His kingdom ; rejoice to view the glory with which He is crowned ; and pray for the time when all nations shall behold His majesty and celebrate His praise.

2. That it is not merely vain and foolish, but also impious and fearful, to contend with the Lord Jehovah. Presumptuous man ! throw down the weapons of thy rebellion ; renounce thy perverse counsels and evil ways ; and meekly submit to the Redeemer's sceptre, before confusion and wrath be thy portion.

3. That we should daily pray, that God may be glorified by the conversion of the wicked, and by the edification of His Church ; and that His power should be the subject of our adoring praise ; that power by which He rules over all, subdues the impenitent, and reigns in the hearts of His people.

PRAYER.

Teach us, O Lord, to ascribe all our success and all our blessedness to Thee. Teach us to behold with joy and gratitude the exaltation and glory of Messiah. Subdue us wholly to Thyself, that we may escape the awful end of the proud: and while we praise Thee for Thy love and mercy, may we also praise Thy power, by which Thy word prospers in the earth, and by which we are preserved through faith unto salvation, through Jesus Christ our Redeemer and Advocate. Amen.

PSALM XXII.

DAY 4.]

EVENING PRAYER.

Prophetical: the author, David: this Psalm is prophetic of the sufferings, death, and spiritual victories of our blessed Lord.

(I. *Sufferings of Christ: Complaint and Prayer.*)

- 1 My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?
Why art Thou so far from helping me,
And from the words of my roaring?
- 2 O my God, I cry in the day-time, but Thou hearest not;
And in the night-season, and am not silent.
- 3 But Thou art holy,
O Thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel.
- 4 Our fathers trusted in Thee:
They trusted, and Thou didst deliver them.
- 5 They cried unto Thee, and were delivered:
They trusted in Thee, and were not confounded.
- 6 But I am a worm, and no man;

A reproach of men, and despised of the people.

7 All they that see me laugh me to scorn :

They shoot out the lips, they shake the head, saying,

8 "He trusted on the Lord that He would deliver him :

"Let Him deliver him, seeing He delighted in him."

9 But Thou art He that took me out of the womb :

Thou didst make me hope when I was upon my mother's breasts.

10 I was cast upon Thee from the womb :

Thou art my God from my mother's belly.

11 Be not far from me ; for trouble is near ;

For there is none to help.

12 Many bulls have compassed me :

Strong bulls of Bashan have beset me round..

13 They gaped upon me with their mouths,

As a ravening and roaring lion.

14 I am poured out like water,

And all my bones are out of joint :

My heart is like wax ;

It is melted in the midst of my bowels.

15 My strength is dried up like a potsherd ;

And my tongue cleaveth to my jaws ;

And Thou hast brought me into the dust of death.

16 For dogs have compassed me :

The assembly of the wicked have enclosed me :

They pierced my hands and my feet.

17 I may tell all my bones :

They look and stare upon me.

18 They part my garments among them,

And cast lots upon my vesture.

19 But be not Thou far from me, O Lord :

- O my Strength, haste Thee to help me.
20 Deliver my soul from the sword ;
My darling from the power of the dog.
21 Save me from the lion's mouth :
For Thou hast heard me from the horns of the
unicorns.

(II. *Triumphs of Christ : Praise.*)

- 22 I will declare Thy Name unto my brethren :
In the midst of the congregation will I praise Thee.
23 Ye that fear the Lord ; praise Him ;
All ye seed of Jacob, glorify Him ;
And fear Him, all ye seed of Israel.
24 For He hath not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted ;
Neither hath He hid His face from him ;
But when He cried unto Him, He heard.
25 My praise shall be of Thee in the great congregation :
I will pay my vows before them that fear Him.
26 The meek shall eat and be satisfied :
They shall praise the Lord that seek Him :
Your heart shall live for ever.
27 All the ends of the world shall remember and
turn unto the Lord :
And all the kindreds of the nations shall worship
before Thee.
28 For the kingdom is the Lord's :
And He is the Governor among the nations.
29 All they that be fat upon the earth shall eat and
worship :
All they that go down to the dust shall bow before
Him :

And none can keep alive his own soul.

30 A seed shall serve Him ;

It shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation.

31 They shall come, and shall declare His righteousness

Unto a people that shall be born, that He hath
done this.

REFLECTIONS.

1. Here we meditate on the sufferings of our blessed Lord: and it is a scene which we should contemplate with silent wonder, rather than expatiate upon with fluent language. We follow Him to Gethsemane, to the Judgment-hall, to Calvary; and what do we see? Humiliation the most deep, anguish the most acute, suffering the most intense; in a word, "the travail of His soul," when He offered Himself a sacrifice to God for the expiation of our sins. In this part of the Psalm we have His complaint of dereliction on the part of God: verses 1—6. We have then a most affecting account of the conduct of His enemies and of His crucifixion. But in all this we find Him magnifying God, trusting in Him, and calling upon Him: verses 3, 9, 10, 11, 19, 20, 21. Shall we not again and again consider these things, and learn the love of the Father and of the Son; learn the evil of sin; learn the necessity of faith in Christ; and learn how to suffer?

2. Here we meditate on the Exaltation and Triumph of our blessed Lord. He rose from the grave, and ascended to glory; to the "joy set before Him." And what is the result? The Gospel (ver. 22.) is preached, and its disciples (ver. 23—26.) are called

upon to praise and glorify God, and are encouraged by the most animating assurances, (ver. 26.)—But further, the Conversion of the Gentile world to the faith of Christ is explicitly foretold, (ver. 27—31.) Thus “it pleased the Lord to bruise Him,”—to crush Him with affliction: but after He had made “His soul an offering for sin”—a propitiatory sacrifice—what awaited Him? “He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, and the gracious purpose of Jehovah shall prosper in His hands.”

PRAYER.

O Thou merciful and Almighty Saviour, may we always look to Thee as our crucified, risen, and ascended Lord; and may Thy love constrain us to follow Thee in all holy obedience. Fill our minds with the knowledge of Thyself; and fill our hearts with the love of Thee, that we may live for ever. Multiply the number of Thy faithful people in all lands; and may that time soon arrive in which “all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before Thee,” to Thy honour and glory. Amen.

PSALM XXIII.

General acknowledgment of God's goodness and mercy, and particularly of His care and protection of good men. The author, David.

(I. *Confidence in God's grace.*)

- 1 The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want.
- 2 He maketh me to lie down in green pastures:
He leadeth me beside the still waters.
- 3 He restoreth my soul: He leadeth me
In the paths of righteousness for His name's sake.

- 4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me:
Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me.
- 5 Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies:
Thou anointest my head with oil;
My cup runneth over.
- 6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life:
And I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

REFLECTIONS.

This Psalm is full of consolation and joy. It describes the sincere Christian in a happy frame of mind, dwelling with thankfulness on the goodness of his God and Saviour to him.

1. What is his declaration? "The Lord is my Shepherd." The sincere Christian has returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls. He who calls Himself "the good Shepherd" is his Shepherd.

2. What is his confidence? "I shall not want." I shall want no good thing. I shall "go in and out, and shall find pasture." I shall never be destitute.

3. What are his blessings? He needs repose, and he lies down in green pastures. He needs refreshment, and he is led by still waters. He needs recovery, and he is restored. He needs protection and guidance, and he is conducted in the paths of righteousness. He needs food, and a table is provided for

him. He needs gladness, and he has "the oil of joy for mourning;" "his cup runneth over." He needs comfort and support in all affliction, and the word and promises of God supply them.

4. What is his assurance with respect to the future, and what is his determination? Goodness and mercy will be his portion through life; and he will be a worshipper of God all his days.

PRAYER.

O blessed Jesus, the good Shepherd, may we thus look to Thee and trust in Thee. May we live under Thy guidance and care, partake of the blessings of Thy kingdom, live as those who know Thy voice and follow Thee, and thus finally obtain a place in the house of the Lord above, through Thy mediation and intercession. Amen.

PSALM XXIV.

DAY 5.]

MORNING PRAYER.

Instructive, as Psalm i. David probably wrote this Psalm at the removal of the ark to mount Zion. 2 Sam. vi. 17.

(I. *God's lordship in the world.*)

- 1 The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof;
The world, and they that dwell therein.
- 2 For He hath founded it upon the seas,
And established it upon the floods.

(II. *Citizens of His spiritual kingdom.*)

- 3 Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord?

Or who shall stand in His holy place?

- 4 He that hath clean hands and a pure heart;
 Who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity,
 Nor sworn deceitfully.
- 5 He shall receive the blessing from the Lord,
 And righteousness from the God of his salvation.
- 6 This is the generation of them that seek Him,
 That seek Thy face, O (God of) Jacob.

(III. *Exhortation to receive the King of glory.*)

- 7 Lift up your heads, O ye gates;
 And be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors;
 And the King of glory shall come in.
- 8 Who is this King of glory?
 The Lord strong and mighty,
 The Lord mighty in battle.
- 9 Lift up your heads, O ye gates;
 Even lift them up, ye everlasting doors;
 And the King of glory shall come in.
- 10 Who is this King of glory?
 The Lord of hosts, He is the King of glory.

REFLECTIONS.

We have here,

1. A declaration of truth that ought not to be forgotten. All creation is God's property. We look upon the world and upon ourselves. All belongs to Him: and shall we not revere, and honour, and obey the Maker and Lord of all things?

2. A question proposed and answered which ought to be seriously considered. Who is the true worshipper of God on earth, and who shall be advanced to the heavenly bliss? He is one whose repentance and faith

lead to holiness and obedience. He carefully attends to practical piety; to his hands and heart and tongue; to his actions, thoughts, affections, and words. The path of obedience is that which leads to heaven; and those who walk in it are the persons who really seek God; seek His favour here and for ever.

3. A fact that ought to cheer our hearts. The gates of heaven have been opened to our ascended Lord, and they are open to all believers. If we really follow Him, we shall pass through them into the final bliss.

PRAYER.

O Thou who art the King of glory, and the Lord of all, grant that we may so believe in Thee, and so follow Thee in all holiness and obedience, that we may receive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of our salvation, and finally pass through the everlasting doors into the world of life and glory. Hear us, we beseech Thee, for Thine own name's sake. Amen.

PSALM XXV.

Prayer for pardon and help. Written probably by David in a time of trial.

(I. *Prayer for instruction, guidance, and pardon.*)

1 Unto Thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul.

2 O my God, I trust in Thee:

Let me not be ashamed,

Let not mine enemies triumph over me.

3 Yea, let none that wait on Thee be ashamed:

Let them be ashamed which transgress without cause.

- 4 Show me Thy ways, O Lord ;
Teach me Thy paths.
5 Lead me in Thy truth, and teach me :
For Thou art the God of my salvation ;
On Thee do I wait all the day.
6 Remember, Lord, Thy tender mercies
and Thy loving kindnesses ;
For they have been ever of old.
7 Remember not the sins of my youth,
nor my transgressions ;
According to Thy mercy remember Thou me
For Thy goodness' sake, O Lord.

(.II *The goodness of God.*)

- 8 Good and upright is the Lord :
Therefore will He teach sinners in the way.
9 The meek will He guide in judgment :
And the meek will He teach His way.
10 All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth
Unto such as keep His covenant and His testi-
monies.

- 11 For Thy Name's sake, O Lord,
Pardon mine iniquity ; for it is great.
(III. *Blessedness of the righteous.*)

- 12 What man is he that feareth the Lord ?
Him shall He teach in the way that he shall choose :
13 His soul shall dwell at ease ;
And his seed shall inherit the earth.
14 The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him ;
And He will show them His covenant.

(IV. *Various petitions.*)

- 15 Mine eyes are ever toward the Lord ;

- For He shall pluck my feet out of the net.
- 16 Turn Thee unto me, and have mercy upon me ;
For I am desolate and afflicted.
- 17 The troubles of my heart are enlarged ;
O bring Thou me out of my distresses.
- 18 Look upon mine affliction and my pain ;
And forgive all my sins.
- 19 Consider mine enemies ; for they are many ;
And they hate me with cruel hatred.
- 20 O keep my soul, and deliver me :
Let me not be ashamed ; for I put my trust in Thee.
- 21 Let integrity and uprightness preserve me ;
For I wait on Thee.
- 22 Redeem Israel, O God, out of all his troubles.

REFLECTIONS.

In this deeply spiritual and devout Psalm, (written evidently in a time of affliction and trouble,) we see,

1. How earnestly the true Christian prays. He prays in faith. He prays for prosperity and preservation. He prays for divine instruction and guidance. He prays for mercy and pardon. He is not forgetful of the welfare of others. He pleads his cause with God as one who trusts in Him, and who has experienced His goodness ; as one who knows his own sinfulness, and his need of the divine mercy. This is serious devotion.

2. How fully persuaded he is of God's loving kindness and gracious conduct towards the meek, the humble, and the obedient. This is our consolation. Our iniquity is great : but God, for His own Name's sake,

according to His mercy in Christ Jesus, will pardon our sins, if we approach Him with humble and contrite hearts. We ought to be fully convinced of God's love and compassion; of His faithfulness and truth. This is to honour Him.

3. How confidently he asserts the blessedness of the righteous. They fear, revere, love, and obey God: and He teaches them; He blesses them in themselves and their offspring with temporal good; He guides them in the right way; and He makes them acquainted with spiritual things according to the Gospel: they understand what the world does not understand, and possess what it does not possess.

4. How urgently he continues and repeats his petitions. His afflictions, his enemies, his sins, are all before him. He unfolds his heart and condition to God; for from Him only he expects comfort, deliverance, and pardon.

PRAYER.

Give us, O Lord, a right view and sense of ourselves and of our condition; and may we call upon Thee in earnest prayer at all times, and especially in affliction. Give us an entire confidence in Thy mercy, goodness, and truth; and make us acquainted with Thy covenant. May we so humble ourselves before Thee, so trust in Thee, fear Thee, and keep Thy commandments, that Thy blessing may rest upon us, and that we may be redeemed out of all our troubles, and be made to rejoice in Thy salvation, through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

PSALM XXVI.

Prayer, as Psalm vii. A Psalm of David, written, perhaps, when persecuted by Saul.

(I. Appeal to God.)

- 1 Judge me, O Lord;
For I have walked in mine integrity :
I have trusted also in the Lord ;
Therefore I shall not slide.
- 2 Examine me, O Lord, and prove me ;
Try my reins and my heart.
- 3 For Thy lovingkindness is before mine eyes :
And I have walked in Thy truth.

(II. Separation from the wicked.)

- 4 I have not sat with vain persons,
Neither will I go in with dissemblers.
- 5 I have hated the congregation of evil doers ;
And will not sit with the wicked.

(III. Resolve to worship God.)

- 6 I will wash mine hands in innocency :
So will I compass Thine altar, O Lord :
- 7 That I may publish with the voice of thanksgiving,
And tell of all Thy wondrous works.
- 8 Lord, I have loved the habitation of Thy house,
And the place where Thine honour dwelleth.

(IV. Prayer and Resolve.)

- 9 Gather not my soul with sinners,
Nor my life with bloody men :
- 10 In whose hands is mischief,
And their right hand is full of bribes.

- 11 But as for me, I will walk in mine integrity :
Redeem me and be merciful unto me.
- 12 My foot standeth in an even place :
In the congregations will I bless the Lord.

REFLECTIONS.

1. Here see the good man. As to conduct, he walks in integrity, according to God's word. As to principle, he trusts in God. As to sincerity, he appeals to God to examine and prove him. And what is the happiness which he enjoys? Security: he shall be preserved in the way of righteousness. The favour of God is what he values and seeks; and this he enjoys. How happy is that Christian who can say, that this is a description of himself!

2. A good man is "in the world," but he is not "of the world." The divine grace has made him a separate character: in his sentiments, principles, spirit, and conduct he is distinct from the heedless multitude around him: and he is resolved to have no fellowship with them. It is, indeed, a part of our integrity as Christians to maintain our separation from the ungodly in every thing that is contrary to Christian holiness, and therefore displeasing to God.

3. One of the distinguishing features in the character of a good man is, his delight in the public worship of God. He loves the ordinances of the Church. He enters into God's house with a thankful heart, to hear of His glory, goodness, and wondrous works. In vain do we worship God unless we can lift up to Him holy hands; unless we renounce sin and walk in the way of obedience.

4. If we would be kept from the ways and from the end of the ungodly, we must pray for, and depend upon, the redeeming mercy and grace of God in Christ Jesus. Thus only can we walk in our integrity: thus only can we worship God acceptably: thus only shall we be able to speak always of the goodness of God, and to bless His Name in private and in public. It is only by prayer that we shall be able to perform our pious resolutions.

PRAYER.

Grant, O Lord, that by Thy Holy Spirit we may live according to Thy will, upright in heart and conduct; separate from the ungodly; and worshippers of Thee in Thy house of prayer. Conscious of our sinfulness and weakness, of our enemies and dangers, and also of Thy righteous requirements; may we always abound in earnest supplication; proceed in Thy strength; and thus rejoice in Thy salvation, to the glory of Thy Name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

 PSALM XXVII.

DAY 5.]

EVENING PRAYER.

Prayer, as Psalm iii. A Psalm of David, written, probably, when persecuted by Saul.

(*I. Confidence in God.*)

1 The Lord is my light and my salvation;
whom shall I fear?

The Lord is the strength of my life ;
of whom shall I be afraid ?

2 When the wicked, even mine enemies and my foes,
Come upon me to eat up my flesh,
They stumbled and fell.

3 Though a host should encamp against me,
my heart shall not fear :
Though war should rise against me,
in this will I be confident.

(II. *Desire of God's service.*)

4 One thing have I desired of the Lord,
that will I seek after ;
That I may dwell in the house of the Lord
all the days of my life,
To behold the beauty of the Lord,
And to enquire in His temple.

(III. *Protection and deliverance.*)

5 For in the time of trouble
He shall hide me in His pavilion :
In the secret of His tabernacle shall He hide me :
He shall set me up upon a rock.
6 And now shall my head be lifted up above mine
enemies round about me :
Therefore will I offer in His tabernacle sacrifices
of joy ;
I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the Lord.

(IV. *Prayer for support and protection.*)

7 Hear, O Lord, when I cry with my voice :
Have mercy also upon me, and answer me.
8 When Thou saidst, " Seek ye my face,"

- My heart said unto Thee,
 "Thy face, Lord, will I seek."
 9 Hide not Thy face far from me;
 Put not Thy servant away in anger :
 Thou hast been my help ; leave me not,
 Neither forsake me, O God of my salvation.
 10 When my father and my mother forsake me,
 Then the Lord will take me up.
 11 Teach me Thy way, O Lord,
 And lead me in a plain path,
 because of mine enemies.
 12 Deliver me not over unto the will of mine enemies;
 For false witnesses are risen up against me,
 And such as breathe out cruelty.

(V. *Faith ; Exhortation.*)

- 13 I had fainted, unless I had believed to see
 The goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.
 14 Wait on the Lord : be of good courage,
 And He shall strengthen thy heart :
 Wait, I say, on the Lord.

REFLECTIONS.

1. Here is true faith : we trust in God as our light and salvation ; we heartily acknowledge Him to be such. Here is the blessedness which it brings us : we banish fear from our hearts : we know that no enemy shall prevail against us. The true believer speaks of the past with gratitude ; of the present with tranquillity ; and of the future with confidence, knowing the truth, power, and goodness of God.

2. Happy is he who makes the worship of God a primary object of his desire ! In that worship the

good man sees the divine beauty and glory ; the perfections of God as peculiarly manifested in our redemption : and there too he enquires and learns the way of life. If we would dwell in the mansions of God above, we must regularly and joyfully frequent the ordinances of His house on earth. And we should most carefully examine ourselves, as to what we there behold and enquire.

3. Trials of various kinds are to be expected by us here ; but if we trust in God, and worship Him, we may be assured of the divine protection, and be confident of safety and triumph. It is thus that our trials, when rightly improved, lead to thanksgiving and songs of joy.

4. Whatever be our assurance, we must never forget present circumstances and present duty. We need always pray for divine mercy ; for divine favour, support, and presence ; for divine guidance and deliverance. It is no longer well with us than while we really attend to this. The dearest earthly ties may be, will be dissolved : but if God, the everlasting Father, be with us, we shall enjoy safety and comfort.

5. When faith fails we shall faint ; shall be low, dispirited, disconsolate. But faith, resting upon God's promises ; and patience waiting for their fulfilment ; these are the support of the soul ; and by these the good man is enabled to proceed courageously in his thorny pilgrimage, and to speak to others the language of encouragement with a decided mind.

PRAYER.

O blessed God, have mercy upon us, and give us faith, that we may put our whole trust in Thee, and banish fear from our hearts. May we delight to worship Thee in the ordinances of Thy Church, and be made the partakers of Thy grace and Holy Spirit, that we may be delivered from all our enemies, rejoice in Thy goodness to us, experience Thy favour and presence, and be enabled to encourage others in the way of life, to the glory of Thy Name; through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

PSALM XXVIII.

Prayer, as Psalm iv. Written, probably, by David during the rebellion of Absalom.

(I. Prayer for deliverance.)

- 1 Unto Thee will I cry, O Lord my rock;
Be not silent to me:
Lest, if Thou be silent to me,
I become like them that go down into the pit.
- 2 Hear the voice of my supplication,
when I cry unto Thee,
When I lift up my hands toward Thy holy oracle.
- 3 Draw me not away with the wicked,
and with the workers of iniquity,
Which speak peace to their neighbours,
but mischief is in their hearts.

(II. Overthrow of enemies foretold.)

- 4 Give them according to their deeds,

And according to the wickedness of their endeavours :

Give them after the work of their hands ;
Render to them their desert.

- 5 Because they regard not the works of the Lord,
Nor the operation of His hands,
He shall destroy them, and not build them up.

(III. *Praise and Petition.*)

- 6 Blessed be the Lord,
Because He hath heard the voice of my supplication.
7 The Lord is my strength and my shield ;
My heart trusted in Him, and I am helped :
Therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth ;
And with my song will I praise Him.
8 The Lord is their strength,
And He is the saving strength of His anointed.
9 Save Thy people, and bless Thine inheritance :
Feed them also, and lift them up for ever.

REFLECTIONS.

1. The sun is often veiled with clouds. The Christian may be often in darkness and distress. In such seasons here is his example. He must pray earnestly ; he must pray to be heard and answered. He must pray to be kept from all sin, that he may not perish with the ungodly.

2. Here the wicked are described. They do not regard the works and ways, the counsels and laws of God ; but walk in their own way, according to the devices of their evil hearts. Here too their end is foretold. They who sow to the flesh "shall of the

flesh reap corruption:" for God is righteous, and "will render to every man according to his deeds." The wicked are impious as to God; cruel and deceitful as to man; and their end is destruction.

3. Winds drive away the clouds, and the sun shines again. We pray to God; our darkness is dispelled; comfort is restored; and we pour out our hearts in the language of praise and thanksgiving. We can tell what God has done for us, and what He does for all His faithful servants. Our animated praise will lead to earnest prayer for others, that they may largely experience the divine goodness.

PRAYER.

O gracious God, Thou knowest our weakness, dangers, and sorrows; have mercy upon us, and be Thou our strength and our defence. Save us, and Thy whole Church, from all our enemies; bless us with all spiritual blessings; feed us with the bread of life; and grant that we may rise more and more into the life of righteousness; that we may be finally exalted to everlasting glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

PSALM XXIX.

Displaying the Divine perfections, as Psalm viii. Written by David.

(I. *Admonition to give glory to God.*)

- 1 Give unto the Lord, O ye mighty,
Give unto the Lord glory and strength.
- 2 Give unto the Lord the glory due unto His name:
Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.

(II. God's power in nature and in grace.)

- 3 The voice of the Lord is upon the waters :
The God of glory thundereth :
The Lord is upon many waters.
- 4 The voice of the Lord is powerful ;
The voice of the Lord is full of majesty.
- 5 The voice of the Lord breaketh the cedars ;
Yea, the Lord breaketh the cedars of Lebanon.
- 6 He maketh them also to skip like a calf ;
Lebanon and Sirion like a young unicorn.
- 7 The voice of the Lord divideth the flames of fire.
- 8 The voice of the Lord shaketh the wilderness ;
The Lord shaketh the wilderness of Kadesh.
- 9 The voice of the Lord maketh the hinds to calve,
And discovereth the forests.
And in His temple doth every one speak of His
glory.

(III. His majesty and goodness.)

- 10 The Lord sitteth upon the flood ;
Yea, the Lord sitteth King for ever.
- 11 The Lord will give strength unto His people ;
The Lord will bless His people with peace.

REFLECTIONS.

1. All men, both high and low, should unite in ascribing glory to God, and in worshipping Him with holy worship ; with clean hands and upright hearts. Those only honour God aright who thus magnify and serve Him.

2. God is great in the works of creation. In the thunder, which is here called "the voice of the Lord," we are reminded of His power and majesty. How

mighty is the lightning ! How does it destroy buildings and trees ; cleave the rocks ; and strike terror through all tribes of animals ! The thunder roars ; the mountains tremble ; we stand in silent awe, and own the power of God. The lightning flashes, mild or angry in its appearance, and we feel our weakness. We cannot silence the one : we cannot resist the other.

3. Amidst the tumult of the elements we look up unto the Lord, and acknowledge His government over all things. He is King for ever. And the delightful consideration is this, that He whose power is seen in creation will give strength to His people, and inspire them, amidst the confusion and uproar of the world, with peace in their souls.

PRAYER.

O ever-living Head of the Church, Thou who art King in Zion, may the wonders of the natural world lead us to consider the wonders of the spiritual world. Grant that we may so hear and understand the terrors of the Law that we may seek and enjoy the peace which the Gospel gives to the believing heart ; and thus may we be able, in Thy temple, and out of it, to speak of Thy glory, to the praise of Thy Name and the edification of our souls. Grant this, we beseech Thee, for Thy Name's sake. Amen.

PSALM XXX.

DAY 6.]

MORNING PRAYER.

Thanksgiving, as Psalm xviii. "A Psalm and Song at the dedication of the house of David;" supposed, by some, to have been written at the dedication of the threshing floor of Araunah.

(I. *Thanksgiving.*)

- 1 I will extol Thee, O Lord;
for Thou hast lifted me up,
And hast not made my foes to rejoice over me.
- 2 O Lord my God, I cried unto Thee,
And Thou hast healed me.
- 3 O Lord, Thou hast brought up my soul from the
grave:
Thou hast kept me alive, that I should not go down
to the pit.

(II. *Exhortation to praise God.*)

- 4 Sing unto the Lord, O ye saints of His,
And give thanks at the remembrance of His holiness.
- 5 For His anger endureth but a moment;
In His favour is life:
Weeping may endure for a night,
But joy cometh in the morning.

(III. *David's case and conduct.*)

- 6 And in my prosperity I said,
I shall never be moved
- 7 Lord, by Thy favour Thou hast made my mountain
to stand strong:
Thou didst hide Thy face, and I was troubled.
- 8 I cried to Thee, O Lord,
And unto the Lord I made supplication.
- 9 What profit is there in my blood, when I go down
to the pit?

Shall the dust praise Thee? Shall it declare Thy truth?

10 Hear, O Lord, and have mercy upon me :
Lord, be Thou my Helper.

(IV. *Gratitude.*)

11 Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing :
Thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me
with gladness ;

12 To the end that my glory may sing praise to Thee,
and not be silent.

O Lord my God, I will give thanks unto Thee for
ever.

REFLECTIONS.

1. When God gives us deliverance, health, and comfort, we should not fail to praise Him for His goodness to us. In trouble, our language should be that of humble and believing prayer; in prosperity, it should be that of joyful and animated thanksgiving.

2. The holiness and the gracious conduct of God are delightful subjects for our meditation and praise. The favour of God is our life and happiness: but our enjoyment of it may be suspended, either as a trial or as a punishment: then our portion is darkness and sorrow. But He who "knoweth our frame" pities us in our distress, and the morning of gladness soon dawns on the night of sorrow; and we "give thanks at the remembrance of His holiness."

3. In the days of prosperity we are apt to form splendid dreams of security and happiness: but God, in order to cure us of this folly, in order to teach us

that our happiness depends upon Him and His favour, leads us into the thorny walks of trial: and then we feel the need of His mercy and help, and make our earnest supplication to Him.

4. When we abandon all presumptuous and vain thoughts; when we are humble and devout; when we mourn and are contrite; our heavenly Father will give us consolation, and turn our sorrow into gladness: and then we shall praise Him, and not be silent; we shall be always giving thanks to Him for His great goodness.

PRAYER.

Grant, O Lord, that we may never forget Thy benefits, but acknowledge them with unfeigned gratitude. In the season of trial may we patiently wait for the return of light and joy. Keep us, we beseech Thee, from false security and vain confidence; and may we continually live in dependence upon Thee. In the day of affliction, look upon us in mercy, and be Thou our Helper: and when Thou art pleased to give us joy and gladness, may we praise Thee with thankful hearts; through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

PSALM XXXI.

Prayer, as Psalm iii. A Psalm of David, written, probably, during Saul's persecution.

(I. *Prayer for deliverance.*)

1 In Thee, O Lord, do I put my trust;
Let me never be ashamed:

- Deliver me in Thy righteousness.
- 2 Bow down Thine ear to me ;
Deliver me speedily : be Thou my strong rock,
For a house of defence to save me.
- 3 For Thou art my rock and my fortress ;
Therefore for Thy Name's sake lead me, and guide
me.
- 4 Pull me out of the net that they have laid privily
for me :
For Thou art my strength.
- 5 Into Thy hand I commit my spirit :
Thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth.

(II. *Joy in the divine favour.*)

- 6 I have hated them that regard lying vanities ;
But I trust in the Lord.
- 7 I will be glad and rejoice in Thy mercy :
For Thou hast considered my trouble ;
Thou hast known my soul in adversities :
- 8 And hast not shut me up into the hand of the
enemy :
Thou hast set my feet in a large room.

(III. *Prayer in a forlorn state.*)

- 9 Have mercy upon me, O Lord, for I am in trouble :
Mine eye is consumed with grief,
Yea, my soul and my belly.
- 10 For my life is spent with grief,
And my years with sighing :
My strength faileth because of mine iniquity,
And my bones are consumed.
- 11 I was a reproach among all mine enemies,
But especially among my neighbours,

And a fear to mine acquaintance :
 They that did see me without fled from me.

- 12 I am forgotten as a dead man out of mind :
 I am like a broken vessel.
- 13 For I have heard the slander of many :
 Fear was on every side :
 While they took counsel together against me,
 They devised to take away my life.

(IV. *Prayer in faith.*)

- 14 But I trusted in Thee, O Lord :
 I said, "Thou art my God."
- 15 My times are in Thy hand :
 Deliver me from the hand of mine enemies,
 And from them that persecute me.
- 16 Make Thy face to shine upon Thy servant :
 Save me for Thy mercies' sake.
- 17 Let me not be ashamed, O Lord ;
 For I have called upon Thee :
 Let the wicked be ashamed,
 And let them be silent in the grave.
- 18 Let the lying lips be put to silence :
 Which speak grievous things proudly
 And contemptuously against the righteous.

(V. *God's mercies to His people.*)

- 19 O how great is Thy goodness,
 Which Thou hast laid up for them that fear Thee ;
 Which Thou hast wrought for them that trust in
 Thee
 Before the sons of men !
- 20 Thou shalt hide them in the secret of Thy presence
 from the pride of man :

Thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion
from the strife of tongues.

21 Blessed be the Lord :

For He hath showed me His marvellous kindness
in a strong city.

22 For I said in my haste,

“I am cut off from before Thine eyes :”

Nevertheless Thou heardest the voice of my suppli-
cations

When I cried unto Thee.

(VI. *Exhortation.*)

23 O love the Lord, all ye His saints :

For the Lord preserveth the faithful,
And plentifully rewardeth the proud doer.

24 Be of good courage,

and He shall strengthen your heart,
All ye that hope in the Lord.

REFLECTIONS.

1. Our troubles, dangers, and sorrows may be many: but God is our strength and defence: in Him we always have a refuge. But we must pray to Him, and commit ourselves to Him; for thus only shall we be redeemed from all evil. Thus acted our blessed Redeemer: thus all His true followers act.

2. Faith and prayer soon lead us to the experience of the divine goodness; soon lead us to rejoice in the mercy of Him who has considered our trouble, known our souls in adversity, delivered us from our enemies, and put us in the enjoyment of liberty and peace. Thus was our blessed Lord triumphant over all evil: and thus shall His people triumph through Him.

3. The "Man of sorrows" might have used such language. What love and gratitude do we owe to Him for all that He suffered for us !—But this world is a vale of tears ; and at some seasons, and to some persons, it is peculiarly so. We pass through tribulation to the world where tribulation is unknown. We must not repine or complain ; but look to our Forerunner in the same path, and trust in Him, and follow Him in patience.

4. In our troubles faith must not fail, and prayer must abound. Our times, and the events of life, are in the hand of God : in Him we trust ; and to Him we pray for deliverance, for His favour, and for final triumph.

5. When the prayer of faith is answered, how great is the joy and satisfaction of God's servants. In their haste they felt painfully, and spoke despondingly ; but when faith prevails, and their souls are composed, they can speak of preservation, and bless the Lord for His marvellous kindness to them, in discomfiting their enemies, and in giving them security and peace.

6. Those who have known the divine goodness will exhort, comfort, and animate others in the way of godliness. The Lord is righteous : He preserves His people, and punishes their adversaries. Persuaded of this we look to Jesus and to the cloud of witnesses ; and our hearts are strengthened, and our hope is made steadfast.

PRAYER.

O blessed God, we are Thine, and our times are in

Thy hands: whatever our troubles and sorrows, our enemies and dangers may be, may we always look unto Jesus; pray without ceasing; maintain our confidence; wait with patience; and persevere in well doing. Thus may we walk before Thee, until the sorrows of the present time are exchanged for the everlasting joy and rest which remain for Thy people, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PSALM XXXII.

DAY 6.]

EVENING PRAYER.

Penitential. A Psalm of David, written, probably, after he had obtained pardon of his sins in the matter of Uriah.

(I. True blessedness.)

- 1 Blessed is the man whose transgression is forgiven,
Whose sin is covered.
- 2 Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth
not iniquity,
And in whose spirit there is no guile.

(II. Concealment and Confession of sin.)

- 3 When I kept silence my bones waxed old
Through my roaring all the day long.
- 4 For day and night Thy hand was heavy upon me:
My moisture is turned into the drought of summer.
- 5 I acknowledged my sin unto Thee,
And mine iniquity have I not hid.
I said, "I will confess my transgressions unto the
Lord;"
And Thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin.

(III. Mercy for all who seek it.)

6 For this shall every one that is godly pray unto
Thee

In a time when Thou mayest be found :

Surely in the floods of great waters

They shall not come nigh unto him.

(IV. Confidence in God.)

7 Thou art my hiding place ;

Thou shalt preserve me from trouble ;

Thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance.

(V. A promise.)

8 I will instruct thee and teach thee

in the way which thou shalt go :

I will guide thee with mine eye.

(VI. Warning.)

9 Be ye not as the horse,

Or as the mule, which have no understanding :

Whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle,

Lest they come near unto thee.

10 Many sorrows shall be to the wicked :

But he that trusteth in the Lord,

Mercy shall compass him about.

(VII. Exhortation to joy.)

11 Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, ye righteous :

And shout for joy, all ye that are upright in heart.

REFLECTIONS.

1. We are truly blessed when through faith in Christ, we are pardoned, justified, and sanctified. This

blessedness should be the subject of our serious study and earnest prayer.

2. See the true penitent. While he conceals his sins he is unhappy ; when he confesses them to God, he obtains pardon and peace.

3. The gracious dealings of God with the penitent are recorded in Scripture for our guidance and encouragement. If we humble ourselves before Him, no trials and afflictions shall hurt us ; for God will be our comforter and preserver.

4. Here see the true penitent rejoicing in faith : he looks to God as his refuge and his guardian, and is assured that he shall celebrate His praise in joyful songs.

5. Here is a gracious promise ; God will teach us by His word and Spirit, and He will guide us by His watchful providence. If we look to God, and wait on Him, He will be thus gracious to us.

6. Here is a salutary caution. If we be self-willed and obstinate, many sorrows will be our portion : but if we be humble and teachable, and trust in the divine mercy, we shall largely experience the lovingkindness of God.

7. It is the privilege and duty of the real Christian to rejoice in the Lord, and to declare his joy and gladness in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs.

PRAYER.

Grant us grace, O Lord, so to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ that we may be blessed in Him. Give us

true repentance; give us a sure trust in Thy mercy; teach us in Thy truth, and guide us in all our ways: make us humble and submissive, teachable and obedient; and grant that we, being upright in heart, may rejoice in Thee, and celebrate Thy goodness with joyful lips. We beseech Thee thus to be gracious to us, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

PSALM XXXIII.

Displaying the Divine perfections, as Psalm viii. Probably written by David.

(I. Exhortation to joy and praise.)

- 1 Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous :
For praise is comely for the upright.
- 2 Praise the Lord with harp :
Sing unto Him with the psaltery,
And an instrument of ten strings.
- 3 Sing unto Him a new song ;
Play skilfully with a loud noise.

(II. Truth, righteousness, and goodness of God.)

- 4 For the word of the Lord is right ;
And all His works are done in truth.
- 5 He loveth righteousness and judgment :
The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord.

(III. His power in Creation.)

- 6 By the word of the Lord were the heavens made ;
And all the host of them by the breath of His
mouth.

7 He gathereth the waters of the sea together as a heap :

He layeth up the depth in storehouses.

8 Let all the earth fear the Lord :

Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him.

9 For He spake, and it was done ;

He commanded, and it stood fast.

(IV. *His providence, especially over His people.*)

10 The Lord bringeth the counsel of the heathen to nought :

He maketh the devices of the people of none effect.

11 The counsel of the Lord standeth for ever,

The thoughts of His heart to all generations.

12 Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord ;

And the people whom He hath chosen for His own inheritance.

13 The Lord looketh from heaven ;

He beholdeth all the sons of men.

14 From the place of his habitation

He looketh upon all the inhabitants of the earth.

15 He fashioneth their hearts alike ;

He considereth all their works.

16 There is no king saved by the multitude of a host :

A mighty man is not delivered by much strength.

17 A horse is a vain thing for safety :

Neither shall he deliver any by his great strength.

18 Behold, the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear Him,

Upon them that hope in His mercy ;

19 To deliver their soul from death,

And to keep them alive in famine.

(V. Confidence and joy of the righteous.)

- 20 Our soul waiteth for the Lord :
He is our help and our shield.
21 For our heart shall rejoice in Him,
Because we have trusted in His holy Name.

(VI. Their prayer.)

- 22 Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us,
According as we hope in Thee.

REFLECTIONS.

1. The righteous and upright are here called upon to rejoice in the Lord, to praise Him, to sing unto Him, to use all their talents in celebrating His goodness.

2. The wisdom of God in His word, the righteousness of His ways, His holiness, and His abounding goodness, are subjects to inspire our hearts with joy, and to fill our lips with praise.

3. The visible works of creation should always remind us of their Maker ; of His wisdom, power, and goodness : and when we think of Him, our souls ought to be filled with reverence and holy awe.

4. In Providence we see another exhibition of the divine perfections, to inspire our hearts with gladness. God frustrates the plans and purposes of the wicked. His own counsel stands for ever. He looks down upon all His creatures, and observes all their proceedings. And while the ungodly trust in an arm of flesh and in human resources, He looks with approbation on those who fear Him and trust in His mercy ; and He deli-

vers them from their enemies, and supports them in all their trials.

5. See here the faith of the real Christian : he trusts in God, and waits for Him. See also his assurance : he knows, whatever be the present trouble, that his heart shall rejoice in Him.

6. Assurance does not supersede prayer. We are always dependent on mercy ; we always need it ; and if our hope be in God, it shall be shown us, in answer to our supplications.

PRAYER.

Give us, O Lord, such knowledge of Thy word and ways, of Thy holiness and goodness, that we may rejoice in Thee, and declare Thy praise. Help us to meditate with devout minds on Thy works in creation, and to stand in awe of Thee. And while we consider Thy counsel, Thy presence, and Thy righteous government, may we fear Thee, hope in Thy mercy, and find Thee to be our help and our shield. Thus may it please Thee to be gracious to us and to Thy whole Church, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

PSALM XXXIV.

Instructive, as Psalm i. A Psalm of David, written after his escape from the court of Achish (or Abimelech).

(I. *Praise : invitation to it.*)

1 I will bless the Lord at all times :

His praise shall continually be in my mouth.

2 My soul shall make her boast in the Lord :

The humble shall hear thereof, and be glad.

- 3 O magnify the Lord with me,
And let us exalt His Name together.
4 I sought the Lord, and He heard me,
And delivered me from all my fears.
5 They looked unto Him, and were lightened :
And their faces were not ashamed.
6 This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him,
And saved him out of all his troubles.
7 The angel of the Lord encampeth
Round about them that fear Him,
And delivereth them.

(II. *Blessedness of trusting in God.*)

- 8 O taste and see that the Lord is good :
Blessed is the man that trusteth in Him.
9 O fear the Lord, ye His saints :
For there is no want to them that fear Him.
10 The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger :
But they that seek the Lord shall not want
any good thing.

(III. *Practical counsels.*)

- 11 Come, ye children, hearken unto me ;
I will teach you the fear of the Lord.
12 What man is he that desireth life,
And loveth many days, that he may see good ?
13 Keep thy tongue from evil,
And thy lips from speaking guile.
14 Depart from evil, and do good ;
Seek peace, and pursue it.

(IV. *Happiness of the pious.*)

- 15 The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous,

- And His ears are open unto their cry. *
- 16 The face of the Lord is against them that do evil,
To cut off the remembrance of them from the
earth.
- 17 The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth,
And delivereth them out of all their troubles.
- 18 The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken
heart;
And saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.
- 19 Many are the afflictions of the righteous :
But the Lord delivereth him out of them all.
- 20 He keepeth all his bones :
Not one of them is broken.
- 21 Evil shall slay the wicked :
And they that hate the righteous shall be desolate.
- 22 The Lord redeemeth the soul of His servants :
And none of them that trust in Him shall be desolate.

REFLECTIONS.

1. We here see with what animation and delight a good man expatiates on his own blessedness ; in what lofty strains of gratitude and praise he acknowledges the goodness of God towards him in hearing his prayers, in delivering him from his fears, and in saving him out of his troubles. He calls upon others to unite with him in magnifying his gracious Benefactor.

2. If we trust in God, if we fear Him and seek Him, we shall have abundant proof of His goodness : we shall not want any good thing ; we shall feel that we are blessed ; safe under the divine protection, and happy in the divine favour.

3. The true fear of the Lord is a practical principle. It leads us to govern our tongues, to depart from evil, to do good, and to be lovers and promoters of peace. This is the way, not only to save our souls, but also to enjoy happiness upon earth.

4. How awful the assurances here given us about the wicked ! The wrath of God is upon them ; desolation and destruction are before them. But how delightful are the assurances here given us respecting the good ! The eye of the Lord is upon them : He hears their prayers : He is nigh unto them, and delivers and saves them. Their afflictions may be many : but they shall not be desolate. He in whom they trust is their Supporter, Comforter, and Redeemer. Surely each of them must say, "My soul shall make her boast in the Lord."

PRAYER.

Grant, O Lord, that we may fear Thee, trust in Thee, and be contrite in heart before Thee. Give us grace to bring forth the fruits of faith ; and enable us to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things. And while we walk before Thee in faith, humility, and obedience, grant that we may experience Thy protection and favour ; and praise and magnify Thee with thankful and joyful hearts ; through Jesus Christ our Redeemer and Advocate. Amen.

PSALM XXXV.

DAY 7.] MORNING PRAYER.

Prayer, as Psalm vii. A Psalm of David, written, perhaps, when he was persecuted by Saul, or by Absalom and his confederates.

(I. *Prayer for safety.*)

- 1 Plead my cause, O Lord, with them that strive
with me :

Fight against them that fight against me.

- 2 Take hold of shield and buckler,
And stand up for my help.

- 3 Draw out also the spear,
And stop the way against them that persecute me :
Say unto my soul, " I am thy salvation."

(II. *The wicked shall be confounded.*)

- 4 Let them be confounded and put to shame
that seek after my soul :

Let them be turned back and brought to confusion
that devise my hurt,

- 5 Let them be as chaff before the wind ;
And let the angel of the Lord chase them.

- 6 Let their way be dark and slippery ;
And let the angel of the Lord persecute them.

- 7 For without cause they have hid for me their net
in a pit,

Which without cause they have digged for my soul.

- 8 Let destruction come upon him at unawares ;
And let his net that he hath hid catch himself :
Into that very destruction let him fall.

(III. *Joy and deliverance.*)

- 9 And my soul shall be joyful in the Lord :

It shall rejoice in His salvation.

- 10 All my bones shall say,
 " Lord, who is like unto Thee,
 " Which deliverest the poor
 from him which is too strong for him,
 " Yea, the poor and the needy
 from him that spoileth him."

(IV. *Wrongful dealing of the wicked.*)

- 11 False witnesses did rise up ;
 They laid to my charge things that I knew not.
 12 They rewarded me evil for good,
 To the spoiling of my soul.
 13 But as for me, when they were sick,
 I humbled my soul with fasting ;
 And my prayer returned into mine own bosom.
 14 I behaved myself as though he had been my friend
 or brother :
 I bowed down heavily, as one that mourneth for
 his mother.
 15 But in mine adversity they rejoiced,
 and gathered themselves together :
 Yea, the abjects gathered themselves together
 against me, and I knew it not ;
 They did tear me, and ceased not :
 16 With hypocritical mockers in feasts,
 They gnashed upon me with their teeth.

(V. *Supplication to God.*)

- 17 Lord, how long wilt Thou look on ?
 Rescue my soul from their destructions,
 My darling from the lions.
 18 I will give thanks in the great congregation :

I will praise Thee among much people.

19 Let not them that are mine enemies wrongfully
rejoice over me :

Neither let them wink with the eye
that hate me without a cause.

(VI. *Conduct of the wicked.*)

20 For they speak not peace :

But they devise deceitful matters
against them that are quiet in the land.

21 Yea, they opened their mouth wide against me,
And said, "Aha, aha, our eye hath seen it."

(VII. *Renewed Supplication.*)

22 This Thou hast seen, O Lord :

Keep not silence : O Lord, be not far from me.

23 Stir up Thyself, and awake to my judgment.

Even unto my cause, my God and my Lord.

24 Judge me, O Lord my God, according to Thy
righteousness ;

And let them not rejoice over me.

25 Let them not say in their hearts, "Ah, so would
we have it :"

Let them not say, "We have swallowed him up."

(VIII. *The end of the wicked.*)

26 Let them be ashamed and brought to confusion
together that rejoice at my hurt :

Let them be clothed with shame and dishonour
that magnify themselves against me.

(IX. *The joy of the good.*)

27 Let them shout for joy, and be glad,
that favour my righteous cause :

Yea, let them say continually, "Let the Lord be magnified,

"Which hath pleasure in the prosperity of His servant."

28 And my tongue shall speak of Thy righteousness
And of Thy praise all the day long.

REFLECTIONS.

1. We have various enemies: but whoever they may be, God is our refuge: to Him we should look for help: to Him we should present our earnest prayer.

2. Injustice, craft, and cruelty frequently mark the conduct of the ungodly. But in the awful language of the Psalmist they may see what lies before them,—shame, confusion, and destruction.

3. Stedfast faith and humble prayer will soon lead to joy and thanksgiving: for if we trust in God and call upon Him, He will be our deliverer from all our enemies.

4. Falsehood, ingratitude, and cruel mockery are here mentioned as marking the conduct of the wicked. Such things the Holy Jesus suffered from His enemies. We must not account it strange if we experience a measure of the like treatment.

5. From the injustice of men we must look to God; expostulate with Him, pray to Him, and encourage our hearts in Him.

6, 7. Here we see more of the conduct of the wicked; their strife, deceit, and clamour. And here we see the conduct of the good: they do not aim to avenge them-

selves, but they look to God, implore His presence and help, and rely upon Him to frustrate the devices of all their foes.

8, 9. Such are the different ends of the ungodly and of the righteous: shame and dishonour await the former, if they continue in their evil course; but joy and gladness await the latter; they shall praise God all the day long for His goodness, and others also shall magnify Him on their account.

PRAYER.

Whoever our enemies may be, O Lord, be Thou our defender; and may we patiently endure the cruelty and mockery of the wicked, and commit ourselves and our affairs into Thy hands, beseeching Thee to support us in trouble, and to deliver us out of it. Thus, in all cases and at all times, may we suffer as Christians, promoting, by our spirit and conduct, Thy honour and glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PSALM XXXVI.

Instructive, as Psalm i. "A Psalm of David, the servant of the Lord." The occasion unknown.

(I. *Principles and practice of the wicked.*)

- 1 The transgression of the wicked saith in my heart,
That there is no fear of God before his eyes.
- 2 For he flattereth himself in his own eyes.
Until his iniquity be found to be hateful.
- 3 The words of his mouth are iniquity and deceit:
He hath left off to bewise, and to do good.

- 4 He deviseth mischief upon his bed ;
He setteth himself in a way that is not good ;
He abhorreth not evil.

(II. *God's mercy, righteousness, and lovingkindness.*)

- 5 Thy mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens ;
And Thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds.
6 Thy righteousness is like the great mountains ;
Thy judgments are a great deep :
O Lord, Thou preservest man and beast.
7 How excellent is thy lovingkindness, O God !
Therefore the children of men put their trust
under the shadow of Thy wings.
8 They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness
of Thy house ;
And Thou shalt make them drink of the river of
Thy pleasures.
9 For with Thee is the fountain of life ;
In Thy light shall we see light.

(III. *Prayer for the godly.*)

- 10 O continue Thy lovingkindness unto them that
know Thee ;
And Thy righteousness to the upright in heart.
11 Let not the foot of pride come against me ;
And let not the hand of the wicked remove me.

(IV. *Ruin of the ungodly.*)

- 12 There are the workers of iniquity fallen :
They are cast down and shall not be able to rise.

REFLECTIONS.

1. What a dark picture of the wicked ! Without
the fear of God ; self-deceivers ; corrupt in language

and in purpose; walkers in an evil way. O what is man when he is left to himself, under the dominion of sin and of all his enemies !

2. What a striking and delightful transition from the corruption of man to the perfection of God ! Here is glory and goodness ; all that is calculated to fill our minds with lofty thoughts, and our hearts with happy feelings. Boundless mercy, unchangeable faithfulness, immoveable righteousness, and unfathomable judgments ; these are subjects for our meditation. But, in addition to this, we see the lovingkindness of God. He is the Preserver of all His creatures ; and those who know Him put their trust in Him : and surely no language but, that of inspiration can describe their blessedness : verse 8, 9. What blessings are theirs here ! What blessings will be theirs hereafter !

3, 4. It becomes us always to pray for the continuance of the divine goodness to us, and for deliverance and preservation in an evil world. The end of the ungodly is awful. It is our duty to pray for their conversion and for our own edification in godliness.

PRAYER.

O merciful and gracious God, may it please Thee to convince the wicked of their sin and folly, and to bring them to true repentance, that iniquity may not be their ruin : and grant, we beseech Thee, that Thy faithful people may meditate on Thy perfections, be satisfied with the communications of Thy mercy and grace, and always experience the continuance to them of Thy lovingkindness. From Thee, the Fountain of living waters, may we derive life and happiness ; and

in Thy light may we see light both here and for ever;
through Jesus Christ our only Saviour. Amen.

PSALM XXXVII.

DAY 7.] EVENING PRAYER.

Instructive, as Psalm i. A Psalm of David, written, as it would appear, in his old age.

(I. *On Divine Providence.*)

- 1 Fret not thyself because of evildoers,
Neither be thou envious against the workers of
iniquity.
- 2 For they shall soon be cut down like the grass,
And wither as the green herb.
- 3 Trust in the Lord, and do good ;
So shalt thou dwell in the land,
And verily thou shalt be fed.
- 4 Delight thyself also in the Lord ;
And He shall give thee the desires of thy heart.
- 5 Commit thy way unto the Lord ;
Trust also in Him ; and He shall bring it to pass.
- 6 And He shall bring forth thy righteousness as the
light,
And thy judgment as the noonday.
- 7 Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him ;
Fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in
his way,
Because of the man who bringeth wicked devices
to pass.

- 8 Cease from anger, and forsake wrath :
Fret not thyself in any wise to do evil.
- 9 For evildoers shall be cut off :
But those that wait upon the Lord,
they shall inherit the earth.
- 10 For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be:
Yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place,
and it shall not be.
- 11 But the meek shall inherit the earth ;
And shall delight themselves in the abundance of
peace.
- 12 The wicked plotteth against the just,
And gnasheth upon him with his teeth.
- 13 The Lord shall laugh at him :
For he seeth that his day is coming.
- 14 The wicked have drawn out the sword,
And have bent their bow,
To cast down the poor and needy,
And to slay such as be of upright conversation.
- 15 Their sword shall enter into their own heart,
And their bow shall be broken.
- 16 A little that a righteous man hath
Is better than the riches of many wicked.
- 17 For the arms of the wicked shall be broken :
But the Lord upholdeth the righteous.
- 18 The Lord knoweth the days of the upright ;
And their inheritance shall be for ever.
- 19 They shall not be ashamed in the evil time :
And in the days of famine they shall be satisfied.
- 20 But the wicked shall perish,
And the enemies of the Lord shall be as the fat of
lambs :

- They shall consume; into smoke shall they consume away.
- 21 The wicked borroweth, and payeth not again:
But the righteous showeth mercy, and giveth.
- 22 For such as be blessed of Him shall inherit the earth;
And they that be cursed of Him shall be cut off.
- 23 The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord;
And He delighteth in his way.
- 24 Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down:
For the Lord upholdeth him with His hand.
- 25 I have been young, and now am old;
Yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken,
Nor his seed begging bread.
- 26 He is ever merciful, and lendeth;
And his seed is blessed.
- 27 Depart from evil, and do good;
And dwell for evermore.
- 28 For the Lord loveth judgment,
And forsaketh not His saints;
They are preserved for ever:
But the seed of the wicked shall be cut off.
- 29 The righteous shall inherit the land,
And dwell therein for ever.
- 30 The mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom,
And his tongue talketh of judgment.
- 31 The law of his God is in his heart;
None of his steps shall slide.
- 32 The wicked watcheth the righteous,
And seeketh to slay him.
- 33 The Lord will not leave him in his hand,
Nor condemn him when he is judged.

- 34 Wait on the Lord, and keep His way,
And He shall exalt thee to inherit the land:
When the wicked are cut off, thou shalt see it.
- 35 I have seen the wicked in great power,
And spreading himself like a green bay tree.
- 36 Yet he passed away, and, lo, he was not:
Yea I sought him, but he could not be found.
- 37 Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright:
For the end of that man is peace.
- 38 But the transgressors shall be destroyed together:
The end of the wicked shall be cut off.
- 39 But the salvation of the righteous is of the Lord:
He is their strength in the time of trouble.
- 40 And the Lord shall help them, and deliver them:
He shall deliver them from the wicked,
and save them,
Because they trust in Him.

REFLECTIONS.

This Psalm and the seventy-third may be viewed as pious and consolatory meditations on Divine Providence. We may often see the good afflicted, and the wicked prosperous; the good depressed, and the wicked triumphant. Hence the pious need consolation. The ways of God may seem dark and perplexing; but they are always in righteousness. We cannot form a right view of them if we only look to the visible and the present. The ungodly may abound in temporal prosperity; but we do not know the disquietude, vexation, and bitterness of spirit which they may experience. Whatever be their pomp and mirth, it is only the pageant of an hour: their pleasures are only those

which are for a season : and what are the riches, splendour, and delights of the world, if God look upon us with displeasure?

But if the pious are tried and afflicted, they are rich in spiritual blessings, they have the true enjoyment of this life ; the divine favour rests upon them ; and they are safe in the divine protection. Their sorrow will soon pass away as a morning cloud ; and it will be succeeded by the sunshine of eternal joy. They ought to be most fully persuaded of all this : and then they will guard with jealous care against a repining and murmuring spirit, and against complaining language : and they will patiently wait on God, endure trouble with calmness, maintain a right frame of mind and heart, and look with delightful anticipation to the righteous issue of all things. If their cup be bitter, it has much sweetness in it ; and it will be soon exchanged for the cup of unmingled bliss. Let them, by divine grace, only maintain in their cloudy and thorny pilgrimage a right spirit, and walk in the right way ; and they will have ample proof, in their present happiness and future hopes, that godliness is the good cause—profitable unto all things.

PRAYER.

O Lord our God, whatever be the darkness and confusion, the perplexity and sorrow of the present world, may we be fully persuaded of Thy righteousness and faithfulness, of Thy wisdom and goodness. Enable us in all circumstances to acknowledge Thee ; and may we commit ourselves and our affairs into Thy gracious hands ; delight in Thee ; proceed in well-

doing; maintain our souls in faith and patience, in meekness and content; and thus enjoy Thy favour, and glorify Thy name; through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

PSALM XXXVIII.

DAY 8.]

MORNING PRAYER.

Penitential. A Psalm of David, written, probably, to bring his sins to remembrance, in consequence of his offence in the matter of Uriah: it is deeply penitential.

(I. *Prayer.*)

- 1 O Lord, rebuke me not in Thy wrath:
Neither chasten me in Thy hot displeasure.

(II. *Painful state of the Penitent.*)

- 2 For Thine arrows stick fast in me,
And Thy hand presseth me sore.
- 3 There is no soundness in my flesh,
because of Thine anger;
Neither is there any rest in my bones
because of my sin.
- 4 For mine iniquities are gone over mine head:
As a heavy burden they are too heavy for me.
- 5 My wounds stink and are corrupt
Because of my foolishness.
- 6 I am troubled; I am bowed down greatly;
I go mourning all the day long.
- 7 For my loins are filled with a loathsome disease:
And there is no soundness in my flesh.
- 8 I am feeble and sore broken:

I have roared by reason of the disquietness of my heart.

- 9 Lord, all my desire is before Thee;
And my groaning is not hid from Thee.
- 10 My heart panteth, my strength faileth me:
As for the light of mine eyes, it also is gone from me.

(III. Complaint about friends and foes.)

- 11 My lovers and my friends stand aloof from my sore;
And my kinsmen stand afar off.
- 12 They also that seek after my life lay snares for me:
And they that seek my hurt speak mischievous things,
And imagine deceit all the day long.

(IV.. Patience and resignation.)

- 13 But I, as a deaf man, heard not;
And I was as a dumb man that openeth not his mouth.
- 14 Thus I was as a man that heareth not,
And in whose mouth are no reproofs.
- 15 For in Thee, O Lord, do I hope:
Thou wilt hear, O Lord my God.

(V. Prayer for divine help.)

- 16 For I said, Hear me, lest otherwise they should rejoice over me:
When my foot slippeth, they magnify themselves against me.
- 17 For I am ready to halt,
And my sorrow is continually before me.

- 18 For I will declare mine iniquity;
And I will be sorry for my sin.
- 19 But mine enemies are lively, and they are strong:
And they that hate me wrongfully are multiplied.
- 20 They also that render evil for good are mine adversaries;
Because I follow the thing that good is.
- 21 Forsake me not, O Lord:
O my God, be not far from me.
- 22 Make haste to help me,
O Lord, my salvation.

REFLECTIONS.

1. In all our sufferings of body and mind, we should call upon God in prayer, and implore Him to deal with us according to his tender mercies, and not according to our deservings.

2. The true penitent acknowledges the hand of an offended God in all his sufferings. He mourns and is troubled on account of his iniquities. His anguish of spirit may affect his bodily health: or the diseases of the body may represent the sense which he has of his spiritual condition. He is contrite in heart; he is sorrowful and disquieted; and he unfolds his desires to God with the greatest earnestness. Are we acquainted with a repentance of this sort?

3, 4. The desertion of friends, and the malice of enemies, may add to the bitterness of our trials. Such was the experience of our blessed Lord Himself. What need of patience in such seasons! What need of remembering our great Exemplar! Our hope

must be placed in God; and our persuasion must be, that He will hear us: this is our support.

5. In seasons of sanctified affliction we learn our weakness and our sins; and we unfold both before our God, and implore His pardoning mercy and sanctifying and sustaining grace. We pray that God may be nigh to us, and help and save us. We are thus enabled to glorify Him, and to "put to silence the ignorance of foolish men."

PRAYER.

O blessed God, work in our hearts, we beseech Thee, the good work of a true repentance. Make us sensible of our sinfulness; and may we humble ourselves before Thee in godly sorrow and serious confession. Enable us to hope in Thy mercy as the God of our salvation; and grant that we may obtain the blessings of pardon, health, and strength; of joy and peace; through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

PSALM XXXIX.

Instructive. Vanity of human life. A Psalm of David. The argument is the same as that of Ps. xxxvii.; but patience and resignation are here inculcated from a view of the brevity of human life.

(I. *Resolve to be watchful and silent.*)

- 1 I said, "I will take heed to my ways,
 "That I sin not with my tongue:
 "I will keep my mouth with a bridle,
 "While the wicked is before me."

- 2 I was dumb with silence,
I held my peace, even from good ;
And my sorrow was stirred.
3 My heart was hot within me,
While I was musing the fire burned :
Then spake I with my tongue.

(II. *Shortness and vanity of human life.*)

- 4 Lord, make me to know mine end,
And the measure of my days, what it is :
That I may know how frail I am.
5 Behold, Thou hast made my days as a handbreadth ;
And mine age is as nothing before Thee :
Verily every man at his best state is altogether
vanity.
6 Surely every man walketh in a vain show :
Surely they are disquieted in vain :
He heapeth up riches,
And knoweth not who shall gather them.

(III. *Prayer for pardon and relief.*)

- 7 And now, Lord, what wait I for ?
My hope is in Thee.
8 Deliver me from all my transgressions :
Make me not the reproach of the foolish.
9 I was dumb, I opened not my mouth ;
Because Thou didst it.
10 Remove away Thy stroke from me :
I am consumed by the blow of Thy hand.

(IV. *Man a fading creature.*)

- 11 When Thou with rebukes dost correct man for
iniquity,

Thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth ;
Surely every man is vanity.

(V. *Prayer.*)

- 12 Hear my prayer, O Lord,
And give ear unto my cry ;
Hold not Thy peace at my tears :
For I am a stranger with Thee,
And a sojourner, as all my fathers were.
13 O spare me, that I may recover strength,
Before I go hence, and be no more.

REFLECTIONS.

1. It is an important branch of wisdom to know when to speak and when to be silent. It may be prudent in some sorts of company to be silent even as to good things : but let our minds, though sorrowful, meditate on useful subjects.

2. It becomes us to think frequently on the shortness and uncertainty of human life. Worldly men are anxious to amass wealth ; possessions which they must soon leave to others. Happy are they who spend their brief and precarious existence in accumulating the true riches !

3. View the humble believer. His hope is in God : his expectations are from Him : and to Him he prays for pardon and relief.

4. See the true picture of man. He is vanity. Is he strong and beautiful in youth ? He is only like a garment which the moth gnaws and consumes. His strength will soon fail, and his beauty soon fade.

5. All serious reflections on ourselves must lead us to prayer. And what shall we pray for? That our prayers may be heard and answered; that we may feel ourselves to be strangers and sojourners on earth; that we may be spared and recover spiritual strength, and be so renewed in the spirit of our minds that we may be prepared for the hour of our departure hence.

PRAYER.

Impress our hearts, O Lord, with a just sense of the shortness and uncertainty of human life, and enable us to spend our days in laying up treasures in heaven. Pardon our transgressions; comfort us in all our troubles; and strengthen us with strength in our souls; that we may recover Thine image in righteousness and true holiness, and do Thy will. Thus may we live as strangers and sojourners here, and finally obtain everlasting life, through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

PSALM XL.

Prophetical. A Psalm of David. Verses 6—8 refer directly to Christ. Heb. x. 5—9. From verse 13 to the end is the same as Psalm lxx.

(I. *Praise and thanksgiving.*)

- 1 I waited patiently for the Lord;
And He inclined unto me, and heard my cry.
- 2 He brought me up also out of a horrible pit,
Out of the miry clay,
And set my feet upon a rock,
And established my goings.

- 3 And He hath put a new song in my mouth,
Even praise unto our God
Many shall see it, and fear,
And shall trust in the Lord.
- 4 Blessed is the man that maketh the Lord his trust,
And respecteth not the proud,
Nor such as turn aside to lies.
- 5 Many, O Lord my God, are Thy wonderful works
which Thou hast done,
And Thy thoughts which are to us-ward :
They cannot be reckoned up in order unto Thee :
If I would declare and speak of them,
They are more than can be numbered.

(II. *Sacrifice of Christ.*)

- 6 Sacrifice and offering Thou didst not desire ;
Mine ears hast Thou opened :
Burnt offering and sin offering hast Thou not required.
- 7 Then said I, Lo, I come :
In the volume of the book it is written of me,
- 8 I delight to do Thy will, O my God :
Yea, Thy law is within my heart.

(III. *Righteousness preached in the world.*)

- 9 I have preached righteousness in the great congregation :
Lo, I have not refrained my lips, O Lord, Thou knowest.
- 10 I have not hid Thy righteousness within my heart ;
I have declared Thy faithfulness and Thy salvation :

I have not concealed Thy lovingkindness and Thy truth from the great congregation.

(IV. *Prayer and confession.*)

11 Withhold not Thou Thy tender mercies from me,
O Lord :

Let Thy lovingkindness and Thy truth continually preserve me.

12 For innumerable evils have compassed me about :
Mine iniquities have taken hold upon me,
So that I am not able to look up ;
They are more than the hairs of my head :
Therefore my heart faileth me.

13 Be pleased, O Lord, to deliver me :
O Lord, make haste to help me.

(V. *End of the wicked.*)

14 Let them be ashamed and confounded together
that seek after my soul to destroy it :
Let them be driven backward and put to shame
that wish me evil.

15 Let them be desolate, for a reward of their shame,
That say unto me, Aha, aha.

(VI. *Joy of the godly.*)

16 Let all those that seek Thee rejoice and be glad in
Thee :

Let such as love Thy salvation say continually,
"The Lord be magnified."

(VII. *Petition.*)

17 But I am poor and needy ;
Yet the Lord thinketh upon me :

Thou art my help and my deliverer ;
Make no tarrying, O my God.

REFLECTIONS.

1. Faith waits patiently on God in the time of trouble : and this patient waiting soon leads to deliverance and joy. Then we find the blessedness of making the Lord our trust, and meditate with delight on His wonderful dealings with His people.

2. Behold the Lamb of God. No earthly sacrifices could satisfy divine justice, and remove human guilt : but He, the Word made flesh, offered Himself—the one availing sacrifice for sin. Here we see the riches of redeeming mercy and love : we behold them in our crucified Redeemer.

3. As Christ is the Priest, so is He the prophet of His Church : He has preached righteousness in the world : He has made known the faithfulness and salvation of God. “In Him was life ; and the life was the light of men.”

4. When evils abound, and when we have a painful sense of our countless sins, what can we do but pray for the tender mercies of God, and seek deliverance and help, peace and comfort, at His gracious hands ?

5, 6. Shame, confusion, and desolation will be the portion of the impenitent and unbelieving : but those who love God’s salvation shall rejoice, and say continually, “The Lord be magnified.”

7. A due sense of our misery and poverty becomes

us at all times: but we should be fully persuaded that God thinks upon us, and earnestly pray to Him for help—for speedy help.

PRAYER.

We bless Thee, O Lord, for the unspeakable gift of a Saviour: may we look to Him as the only sacrifice for sin, and learn of Him as our prophet; and be made partakers in Him, of the blessedness of those who love Thy salvation. Think upon us, we beseech Thee, and deliver us from all our enemies; comfort us in distress, supply our wants, and enable us to glorify Thee in all our ways; through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

PSALM XLI.

DAY 8.]

EVENING PRAYER.

Prayer, as Psalm iv. A Psalm of David, written, probably, during the rebellion of Absalom. Verse 9 may refer especially to Ahithophel: prophetically it refers to the traitor Judas.

(I. *Blessedness of regarding the poor.*)

- 1 Blessed is he that considereth the poor:
The Lord will deliver him in time of trouble.
- 2 The Lord will preserve him, and keep him alive;
And he shall be blessed upon the earth:
And Thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies.
- 3 The Lord will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing:
Thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness.

(II. *Prayer.*)

- 4 I said, Lord, be merciful unto me :
Heal my soul ; for I have sinned against Thee.

(III. *Complaint about enemies.*)

- 5 Mine enemies speak evil of me,
“ When shall he die, and his name perish ?”
6 And if he come to see me, he speaketh vanity :
His heart gathereth iniquity to itself ;
When he goeth abroad, he telleth it.
7 All that hate me whisper together against me :
Against me do they devise my hurt.
8 “ An evil disease,” say they, “ cleaveth fast unto
him :
“ And now that he lieth he shall rise up no more.”
9 Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted,
Which did eat of my bread,
Hath lifted up his heel against me.

(IV. *Prayer.*)

- 10 But Thou, O Lord, be merciful unto me,
And raise me up, that I may requite them.

(V. *Confidence and thanksgiving.*)

- 11 By this I know that Thou favourest me,
Because mine enemy doth not triumph over me.
12 And as for me, Thou upholdest me in mine integrity,
And settest me before Thy face for ever.
13 Blessed be the Lord God of Israel
From everlasting, and to everlasting.
Amen, and Amen.

REFLECTIONS.

1. If we would have comfort in sickness and trials, we must abound, while in health, in the works of faith and labours of love. The blessing of God is upon those who are good and who do good : thus the merciful obtain mercy.

2. A sinful act is to the soul what a wound is to the body : and a habit of sin is like a continued disease. We look to the mercy of God in Christ Jesus for the pardon of every sin, and for restoration to spiritual health and strength.

3, 4. This is an evil world : foes may be cruel, and friends may be faithless : this David found to be the case ; and so did our blessed Lord : and shall we pass without the like trial ? But in our trouble we must look for consolation and support to God : and if He be merciful to us, we need not regard the treachery of some, or the cruelty of others.

5. How shall we know that we enjoy the divine favour ? By being delivered from our enemies, and by being upheld in the way of righteousness. These are proofs that the eye of God is upon us for good. And how shall we express our sense of the divine goodness ? By ascribing to God all blessing and praise : verse 13. Thus we begin upon earth the song that shall be perpetuated through eternity.

PRAYER.

Fill our hearts, O Lord, with unfeigned charity, that we may be kind and compassionate to all men. Pardon our sins, and sanctify us in body, soul, and spirit. Forgive our enemies, and change their hearts.

In all our troubles may we look to Thee, and do Thou graciously favour us ; deliver us from all evil, uphold us in all goodness and righteousness : and may we bless Thee, the Lord God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting ; through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

PSALM XLII.

Prayer when deprived of the public ordinances of religion. Written by David, probably, during the rebellion of Absalom,

(I. Zealous desire for public worship.)

- 1 As the hart panteth after the water brooks,
So panteth my soul after Thee, O God.
- 2 My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God :
When shall I come and appear before God.
- 3 My tears have been my meat day and night,
While they continually say unto me, Where is thy
God ?
- 4 When I remember these things, I pour out my
soul in me :
For I had gone with the multitude,
I went with them to the house of God,
With the voice of joy and praise,
With a multitude that kept holy day.

(II. Trust in God.)

- 5 Why art thou cast down, O my soul ?
And why art thou disquieted in me ?
Hope thou in God : for I shall yet praise Him
For the help of His countenance.
- 6 O my God, my soul is cast down within me :

- Therefore will I remember Thee from the land of
Jordan,
And of the Hermonites, from the hill of Mizar.
7 Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of Thy water-
spouts :
All Thy waves and Thy billows are gone over me.
8 Yet the Lord will command His lovingkindness in
the day time,
And in the night His song shall be with me,
And my prayer unto the God of my life.
9 I will say unto God my Rock,
Why hast Thou forgotten me ?
Why go I mourning
Because of the oppression of the enemy ?
10 As with a sword in my bones, mine enemies
reproach me ;
While they say daily unto me, Where is thy God ?
11 Why art thou cast down, O my soul ?
And why art thou disquieted within me ?
Hope thou in God ; for I shall yet praise Him,
Who is the health of my countenance, and my God.

REFLECTIONS.

1. This beautiful Psalm can be duly appreciated only by those who love and value the ordinances of the Church, but are deprived of them. God in Christ Jesus is the true believer's object, and the public worship of Him is his delight. He grieves when he cannot engage in it. The language of scoffers will give him additional anguish : and he will recall to mind with pensive sadness those bright and happy days when he went into the house of God with the voice of joy and praise.

2. Whatever may be our trials, of whatever outward privileges we may for a season be deprived, we must maintain an unshaken trust in God, expostulate with our disquieted and cast down souls, and encourage ourselves in the assurance that we shall yet praise Him. If billows roar around us, and if the ungodly reproach us, we must hold fast the conviction, that the Lord will in due time show forth His lovingkindness, and give us abundant cause to celebrate His goodness to us.

PRAYER.

Fill our hearts, O Lord, with a supreme desire of Thyself, and may we delight in Thee and in Thy service, and rejoice to go with the multitude into Thy house with the voice of joy and praise. Whatever be our afflictions, and however we may be deprived of Thy holy ordinances, grant that we may calm the disquietude, and soothe the anguish, of our souls, by hoping in Thee. Thou, O Lord, art the health of our countenance: and in all circumstances may we praise Thy holy name; through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

PSALM XLIII.

The subject of this is the same as the preceding Psalm.

(I. *Prayer to be restored to public worship.*)

1 Judge me, O God, and plead my cause

Against an ungodly nation:

O deliver me from the deceitful and unjust man.

- 2 For Thou art the God of my strength;
Why dost Thou cast me off?
Why go I mourning
Because of the oppression of the enemy ?
- 3 O send out Thy light and Thy truth :
Let them lead me ;
Let them bring me unto Thy holy hill,
And to Thy tabernacles.
- 4 Then will I go unto the altar of God,
Unto God my exceeding joy :
Yea, upon the harp I will praise Thee, O God,
my God.

(II. *Trust in God.*)

- 5 Why art thou cast down, O my soul ?
And why art thou disquieted within me ?
Hope in God : For I shall yet praise Him,
Who is the health of my countenance, and my God.

REFLECTIONS.

The lessons which this Psalm teaches us are such as the following: 1. We must not account it strange if we experience ill treatment from ungodly people. 2. In all our troubles we must look to God, and implore His merciful interposition. 3. We may think in the day of trial that God has cast us off; but it is our duty still to trust in Him as our strength. 4. We shall pray in such seasons, that we may be favoured with the blessings and consolations of public worship: and while we thus pray, we must encourage ourselves with the assurance that our request will be granted. 5. In times of trial we must check the disquietude and despondency of our spirits, by the sure hope that we shall

yet praise God ; that our sorrow will be turned into joy.

PRAYER.

Help us, O Lord, in all the circumstances of life, and whatever may be the disquietude of our hearts, to look up unto Thee in prayer as our God, our strength, and the health of our countenance. Be Thou our exceeding joy ; and may we so trust in Thee, and praise Thee, and serve Thee here, that we may finally be received into everlasting mansions, through the merits and for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PSALM XLIV.

DAY 9.]

MORNING PRAYER.

A prayer, when the people of God were in trouble.

(I. *God's mercies recounted.*)

- 1 We have heard with our ears, O God,
Our fathers have told us,
What work Thou didst in their days,
In the times of old.
 - 2 How Thou didst drive out the heathen with Thy
hand, and planted them ;
How Thou didst afflict the people,
and cast them out.
 - 3 For they got not the land in possession by their
own sword,
Neither did their own arm save them ;
But Thy right hand, and Thine arm,
And the light of Thy countenance,
Because Thou hast a favour unto them.
-

(II. Confidence in distress.)

- 4 Thou art my King, O God :
Command deliverances for Jacob.
- 5 Through Thee will we push down our enemies :
Through Thy Name will we tread them under
that rise up against us.
- 6 For I will not trust in my bow,
Neither shall my sword save me.
- 7 But Thou hast saved us from our enemies,
And hast put them to shame that hated us.
- 8 In God we boast all the day long,
And praise Thy Name for ever.

(III. Distress described.)

- 9 But Thou hast cast us off, and put us to shame ;
And goest not forth with our armies.
- 10 Thou makest us to turn back from the enemy :
And they which hate us spoil for themselves.
- 11 Thou hast given us like sheep appointed for meat ;
And hast scattered us among the heathen.
- 12 Thou sellest Thy people for nought,
And dost not increase Thy wealth by their price.
- 13 Thou makest us a reproach to our neighbours,
A scorn and derision to them that are round
about us.
- 14 Thou makest us a by-word among the heathen,
A shaking of the head among the people.
- 15 My confusion is continually before me,
And the shame of my face hath covered me,
- 16 For the voice of him that reproacheth and blas-
phemeth ;
By reason of the enemy and avenger.

(IV. Profession of integrity.)

- 17 All this is come upon us ;
Yet have we not forgotten Thee,
Neither have we dealt falsely in Thy covenant.
18 Our heart is not turned back,
Neither have our steps declined from Thy way ;
19 Though Thou hast sore broken us in the place of
dragons,
And covered us with the shadow of death.
20 If we have forgotten the Name of our God,
Or stretched out our hands to a strange god;
21 Shall not God search this out ?
For He knoweth the secrets of the heart.
22 Yea, for Thy sake are we killed all the day long ;
We are counted as sheep for the slaughter.

(V. Prayer for succour.)

- 23 Awake, why sleepest Thou, O Lord ?
Arise, cast us not off for ever.
24 Wherefore hidest Thou Thy face,
And forgettest our affliction and our oppression ?
25 For our soul is bowed down to the dust :
Our belly cleaveth unto the earth.
26 Arise for our help,
And redeem us for Thy mercies' sake.

REFLECTIONS.

1. Whether we look upon the past history of the Church, or of our nation, or of our lives, we must magnify God for His goodness and mercy. All blessings, temporal and spiritual, are to be ascribed to Him, as the undeserved fruits of His bounty and love.

2. Prayer and praise may well go together. If we pray in faith, not trusting in ourselves but in God, we may be assured of deliverance, victory, and safety; so that we shall boast in Him, and praise His name.

3. When the Israelites were in captivity, being thus chastised for their sins, how did they act? They poured out their complaint to God. Such is the conduct of the Church, and of every pious individual, in the time of distress. In our troubles we ought to be thoughtful and penitent, and to unfold our case to Him who only can relieve us.

4. Happy is the nation, the Church, the individual, who can say that God is not forgotten, nor His covenant treated unfaithfully, nor His way forsaken. If we thus cleave to God, whatever our afflictions may be, and however we may be persecuted, we may be assured that the eye of God is upon us for good, and that He in due time will deliver us out of our troubles.

5. When we are faithful and upright in our walk before God, we can pray with confidence as well as with earnestness. Our souls may for a season be bowed down to the dust: but He will arise when He sees fit, and be our Helper: He who redeemed Israel from captivity will redeem us; will deliver us from our spiritual enemies, and cause us to rejoice in His salvation; and He will do this for His mercies' sake.

PRAYER.

We magnify Thee, O Lord, for all Thy goodness to Thy Church and people. We have reason to say, that, through all ages, Thou hast done great things for us.

In all our troubles and sorrows, may we call upon Thee, and trust in Thy goodness, faithfulness, and power. Help us to walk before Thee in faith, holiness, and obedience; and may we be supported and comforted in all our afflictions, and redeemed from all evil, for Thy mercies' sake; through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

PSALM XLV.

This Psalm is supposed to have been written upon the occasion of Solomon's marriage. Spiritually viewed it refers to Christ and the Church (Heb. i. 8, 9.), and to the calling of the Gentiles.

(I. Introduction.)

- 1 My heart is inditing a good matter;
I speak of the things which I have made
touching the King:
My tongue is the pen of a ready writer.

(II. Majesty and grace of Christ's kingdom.)

- 2 Thou art fairer than the children of men;
Grace is poured into thy lips:
Therefore God hath blessed thee for ever.
- 3 Gird Thy sword upon Thy thigh, O most mighty,
With Thy glory and Thy majesty.
- 4 And in Thy majesty ride prosperously
Because of truth and meekness and righteousness;
And Thy right hand shall teach Thee terrible
things.
- 5 Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the King's
enemies;
Whereby the people fall under Thee.

- 6 Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever :
The sceptre of Thy kingdom is a right sceptre.
- 7 Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness :
Therefore God, Thy God, hath anointed Thee
With the oil of gladness above thy fellows.
- 8 All Thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and
cassia,
Out of the ivory palaces, whereby they have made
Thee glad.
- 9 Kings' daughters are among Thy honourable
women :
Upon Thy right hand did stand the queen in gold
of Ophir.

(III. *Duty of the Church.*)

- 10 Hearken, O daughter, and consider,
and incline thine ear ;
Forget also thine own people, and thy father's
house ;
- 11 So shall the King greatly desire thy beauty :
For He is thy Lord ; and worship thou Him.

(IV. *Honour paid to her : description of her.*)

- 12 And the daughter of Tyre shall be there with a
gift :
Even the rich among the people
shall intreat thy favour.
- 13 The King's daughter is all glorious within :
Her clothing is of wrought gold.
- 14 She shall be brought unto the King
in raiment of needlework :
The virgins her companions
That follow her shall be brought unto Thee.

- 15 With gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought :
They shall enter into the King's palace.

(V. *Her prosperity.*)

- 16 Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children,
When thou mayest make princes in all the earth.
17 I will make thy name to be remembered
in all generations :
Therefore shall the people praise thee
for ever and ever.

REFLECTIONS.

1. Let our hearts dwell on the good matter here set before us, that we may speak of Christ our King with knowledge and readiness.

2. Here our blessed Lord is described, as to Himself, when compared with men, ver. 2; as a glorious and prosperous spiritual conqueror, ver. 3—5; and as an everlasting and righteous King, ver. 6—8; and as one joyful in the number of converts, ver. 9. Thus we ought to think of our Saviour, as pre-eminently blessed of the Father; as the Teacher of truth, humility, and righteousness, subduing the hearts of men by His word and Spirit; as being Himself God, ruling in righteousness, and hating iniquity; and as rejoicing in His redeemed mystical body, the Church.

3. Here is the duty of the whole Church, and of each of her members. We should remember that Christ is our Lord, whom we are to worship, love, and honour. We must sacrifice or abandon every thing which would induce us to forget our allegiance to Him.

We must do His will, in order that we may live in His favour.

4. Here the call of the Gentiles into the Christian Church is foretold; and then the Church is described in figurative language. She has the beauty of internal and external holiness; and she stands in the presence, and enters into the palace, of her Lord and King.

5. The sixteenth verse foretells the prosperity of the Church in all the earth. Wherever the Gospel is received as the word of power and life, it makes us "kings and priests unto God." The seventeenth verse is the language of the Psalmist, foretelling that Christ would be remembered and praised through all ages.

PRAYER.

O blessed and glorious Saviour, in the light of Thy truth, and by the power of Thy Spirit, may we truly know Thee, and acknowledge Thee in the glory of Thy Person, and in the offices which Thou sustainest. Rule, O God, in all the world, and cause truth, and meekness, and righteousness to prevail universally. May Thy Church see and perform her duty; renounce the world, and shine before Thee and before men in the beauty of holiness; until she shall enter into the everlasting mansions. And may we be of the number of those who remember Thee, and who praise Thee now and for evermore. Amen.

PSALM XLVI.

Thanksgiving for mercies to the Israelites, and, prophetically, to the Church of Christ.

(I. *Confidence of the Church.*)

- 1 God is our refuge and strength,
A very present help in trouble;
- 2 Therefore will not we fear,
Though the earth may be removed,
And though the mountains be carried into the
midst of the sea;
- 3 Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled,
Though the mountains shake with the swelling
thereof.

(II. *Her happiness and safety.*)

- 4 There is a river,
The streams whereof shall make glad the city of
God,
The holy place of the tabernacles of the Most
High.
- 5 God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved:
God shall help her, and that right early.

(III. *Her enemies and refuge.*)

- 6 The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved:
He uttered His voice, the earth melted.
- 7 The Lord of hosts is with us;
The God of Jacob is our refuge.

(IV. *God's judgments in the earth.*)

- 8 Come, behold the works of the Lord,
What desolations He hath made in the earth.

- 9 He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth ;
He breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in
sunder ;
He burneth the chariot in the fire.

(V. *God exalted : He is the Church's refuge.*)

- 10 Be still, and know that I am God :
I will be exalted among the heathen,
I will be exalted in the earth.
11 The Lord of hosts is with us ;
The God of Jacob is our refuge.

REFLECTIONS.

1. The Church militant reposes on God in her troubles, as her strength in weakness and her refuge in distress. He who trusts in God needs not fear the war of elements or the convulsion of worlds.

2. The gladdening streams of mercy and grace, the divine presence, stability, almighty help and protection—these are the treasure and glory of the Church. How happy are her children, who are partakers of these blessings !

3. If confusion prevail through the pride and wrath of man, yet He at whose presence all creation trembles is with His people, and is their refuge. Here is their security and consolation.

4. In the desolations of war we see the divine judgments : and it is at His command that the sword is sheathed, and peace restored. In all the affairs of this world we should acknowledge His will and hand.

PRAYER.

Fulfil, O Lord, Thy gracious word : send forth Thy truth and grace among the heathen, and into every land, that all men may know Thee, and that Thou mayst be exalted as our Creator and Redeemer. And whatever be the dangers, troubles, and sorrows of Thy Church, grant that she may always trust in Thee with unfailing confidence : and may her children be always enabled to say, with joyful hearts, The Lord of hosts is with us ; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Grant this, we beseech Thee, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

PSALM XLVII.

DAY 9.]

EVENING PRAYER.

The nations are exhorted cheerfully to receive the kingdom of Christ.

(I. *Exhortation to celebrate the kingdom of Christ.*)

- 1 O clap your hands, all ye people ;
Shout unto God with the voice of triumph.
- 2 For the Lord most High is terrible ;
He is a great King over all the earth.
- 3 He shall subdue the people under us,
And the nations under our feet.
- 4 He shall choose our inheritance for us,
The excellency of Jacob whom He loved.
- 5 God is gone up with a shout,
The Lord with the sound of a trumpet.
- 6 Sing praises to God, sing praises :
Sing praises unto our King, sing praises ;

- 7 For God is the King of all the earth;
Sing ye praises with understanding.
8 God reigneth over the heathen;
God sitteth upon the throne of His holiness.
9 The princes of the people are gathered together,
Even the people of the God of Abraham:
For the shields of the earth belong unto God:
He is greatly exalted.

REFLECTIONS.

In the first and second verses the object of our praise, the glorious Jehovah, is represented as "terrible"—a Being of infinite majesty; and as "King" over all things. In the third and fourth verses the Jews magnify God for subduing their enemies and giving them the land of Canaan. The following verses contain a lofty and animated effusion of praise, in which God is represented as a conqueror, as the holy and universal Sovereign, whom the faithful children of Abraham, whether Jews or Gentiles, are gathered together to acknowledge.

PRAYER.

Help us, O Lord, to acknowledge Thy glorious Majesty, and Thy supremacy over all things. Help us to praise Thee for the inheritance which Thou hast given us. And, O Thou ascended Saviour, may we sing Thy praises with understanding, and magnify Thee, who sittest on the throne of Thy holiness. Look down in mercy on the darkness and abominations of heathen lands, and bring all nations to the obedience of faith. Mercifully grant that we, and

Thy whole Church, may trust in Thee as our only Saviour, and obey Thee as our King: and may we love Thee with our hearts, honour Thee in our lives, and evermore praise Thee with our lips. Grant this, we beseech Thee, for Thine own Name's sake. Amen.

PSALM XLVIII.

A Psalm of Thanksgiving, describing God's deliverance of the Church.

(I. The glory of the Church.)

- 1 Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised
In the city of our God, in the mountain of His holiness.
- 2 Beautiful for situation,
The joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion,
On the sides of the north, the city of the great King.
- 3 God is known in her palaces for a Refuge.

(II. Messiah's victories.)

- 4 For, lo, the kings were assembled,
They passed by together.
- 5 They saw it, and so they marvelled:
They were troubled, and hasted away.
- 6 Fear took hold upon them there,
And pain, as of a woman in travail.
- 7 Thou breakest the ships of Tarshish,
With an east wind.

(III. Gratitude of the Church.)

- 8 As we have heard, so have we seen
In the city of the Lord of hosts,

In the city of our God :

God will establish it for ever.

9 We have thought of thy loving-kindness, O God,
In the midst of Thy temple.

10 According to Thy Name, O God,
So is Thy praise unto the ends of the earth :
Thy right hand is full of righteousness.

11 Let mount Zion rejoice,
Let the daughters of Judah be glad,
Because of Thy judgments.

(IV. *Her strength and glory.*)

12 Walk about Zion, and go round about her :
Tell the towers thereof :

13 Mark ye well her bulwarks,
Consider her palaces :
That ye may tell it to the generation following.

14 For this God is our God for ever and ever :
He will be our guide even unto death.

REFLECTIONS.

1. The Church is the glory of the world, and the joy of all the earth : God is known in it in His adorable perfections, and as the refuge of His people ; and in it He is to be praised for all His glory and goodness.

2. The mighty of the world may devise the ruin of Zion ; but overthrow and anguish will be the fruit of their impiety and presumption. He whose tempest wrecks the proudest fleet, will confound their plans and efforts. This is the consolation of the pious.

3. The foundations of the Church are firm, and she

shall endure through all generations. We ought to enter into her courts with joy, to hear of, and to meditate upon, the loving-kindness of the Lord; His tender mercies to our perishing race in Christ Jesus: to hear of, and to consider, the righteousness, goodness, and truth that shine forth in His counsels and proceedings. If we rightly understand the nature and blessings of the Church, our hearts will be filled with joy and gladness.

4. Examine the Church; her foundation, her structure, her ordinances, her treasures. She is a spiritual edifice, built by the hand, protected by the power, enlightened by the truth, enriched with the mercy, and adorned with the holiness of Jehovah; of Him who is "our God for ever and ever;" of Him "who will be our guide even unto death;" of Him who after death will be our everlasting portion.

PRAYER.

Give us grace, O Lord, to look upon Thy Church with thankful and joyful hearts. Frustrate, we beseech Thee, the devices of her enemies; and grant that she may be always safe under Thy protection. Make her to be the joy of the whole earth: and may we be of the number of those who think of Thy loving-kindness in the midst of Thy temple; and who praise Thee and rejoice in Thee as our God, our Guide, and our exceeding great reward; through our blessed and only Redeemer, Jesus Christ. Amen.

PSALM XLIX.

Instructive, as Psalm i. The argument is similar to that of Psalm xxxvii. It states the folly of envying the rich, powerful, and wise of the world.

(I. *Invitation to hear instruction.*)

- 1 Hear this, all ye people !
Give ear, all ye inhabitants of the world !
- 2 Both low and high,
Rich and poor, together.
- 3 My mouth shall speak of wisdom ;
And the meditation of my heart
shall be of understanding.
- 4 I will incline mine ear to a parable :
I will open my dark saying upon the harp.

(II. *No man can redeem another.*)

- 5 Wherefore should I fear in the days of evil,
When the iniquity of my heels
shall compass me about ?
- 6 They that trust in their wealth,
And boast themselves in the multitude of their
riches ;
- 7 None of them can by any means redeem his
brother,
Nor give to God a ransom for him :
8 (For the redemption of their soul is precious,
And it ceaseth for ever :)
- 9 That he should live for ever,
And not see corruption.

(III. *Death the portion of all.*)

- 10 For he seeth that wise men die,

Likewise the fool and the brutish person perish,
And leave their wealth to others.

- 11 Their inward thought is,
That their houses shall continue for ever,
And their dwelling places to all generations;
They call their lands after their own names.
- 12 Nevertheless man being in honour abideth not :
He is like the beasts that perish.
- 13 This their way is their folly :
Yet their posterity approve their sayings.
- 14 Like sheep they are laid in the grave ;
Death shall feed on them ;
And the upright shall have dominion over them
in the morning ;
And their beauty shall consume in the grave
from their dwelling.

(IV. *Faith in the resurrection.*)

- 15 But God will redeem my soul
from the power of the grave :
For He shall receive me.

(V. *The worldly prosperous not to be feared.*)

- 16 Be not thou afraid when one is made rich,
When the glory of his house is increased ;
- 17 For when he dieth he shall carry nothing away :
His glory shall not descend after him.
- 18 Though while he lived he blessed his soul :
And men will praise thee,
when thou doest well to thyself.
- 19 He shall go to the generation of his fathers ;
They shall never see light.

20 Man that is in honour, and understandeth not,
Is like the beasts that perish.

REFLECTIONS.

1. How happy are they, whether rich or poor, who listen to the lessons of divine wisdom ! If we find dark sayings upon the pages of Scripture, this should only induce us to examine them with greater diligence.

2. Though days are evil, and though the wicked encompass us, we have no cause for fear. The rich and powerful die, and see corruption, as other men. Riches do not exempt us from the dominion of death.

3. What a picture of human folly ! How many plan, speak, and act as if their residence upon earth were to be perpetual ! The experience of all ages fails to inspire them with wisdom, and to teach them that they are only the creatures of a day ; their power soon to end in weakness, and their beauty soon to fade.

4. How delightful the persuasion, how glorious the prospect of the true believer ! God will redeem him from sin, and death, and the grave, and receive him to eternal bliss and glory. Oh how does the world vanish from our view at the thought of this ! How manifestly does true piety appear to be the good part !

5. See the worthlessness of riches. We possess them, and shine here : we die, and leave them behind us : destitute of piety, we die, and, how awful is the thought ! shall “never see light.”

PRAYER.

O Lord, convince those who trust in worldly riches

of their folly, that they may seek that treasure which will never fail, and never decay: and grant that Thy faithful people may trust in Thee, look always to things eternal, and rejoice in the present blessings and in the future prospects of unfeigned piety; through Jesus Christ our Redeemer and Advocate. Amen.

PSALM L.

DAY 10.]

MORNING PRAYER.

Instructive, as Psalm i. The hypocrisy and formality of the Jews are here reprov'd.

(I. *Majesty of God : His summons.*)

- 1 The mighty God, even the Lord, hath spoken,
And called the earth
From the rising of the sun
unto the going down thereof.
- 2 Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty,
God hath shined.
- 3 Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence:
A fire shall devour before Him,
And it shall be very tempestuous round about Him.
- 4 He shall call to the heavens from above,
And to the earth, that He may judge His people.
- 5 Gather my saints together unto me;
Those that have made a covenant with me by
sacrifice.
- 6 And the heavens shall declare His righteousness:
For God is Judge Himself.

(II. Spiritual, not ceremonial, worship.)

- 7 Hear, O my people, and I will speak;
O Israel, and I will testify against thee :
I am God, even Thy God.
- 8 I will not reprove thee for thy sacrifices
Or thy burnt-offerings, to have been continually
before me.
- 9 I will take no bullock out of thy house,
Nor he-goats out of thy folds.
- 10 For every beast of the forest is mine,
And the cattle upon a thousand hills.
- 11 I know all the fowls of the mountains :
And the wild beasts of the fields are mine.
- 12 If I were hungry, I would not tell thee :
For the world is mine, and the fulness thereof.
- 13 Will I eat the flesh of bulls,
Or drink the blood of goats ?
- 14 Offer unto God thanksgiving :
And pay thy vows unto the Most High :
- 15 And call upon me in the day of trouble :
I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me.

(III. Hypocrites reproved.)

- 16 But unto the wicked God saith,
What hast thou to do to declare my statutes,
Or that thou shouldst take my covenant in thy
mouth ?
- 17 Seeing thou hatest instruction,
And castest my words behind thee.
- 18 When thou sawest a thief, then thou consentedst
with him,
And hast been partaker with adulterers.

- 19 Thou givest thy mouth to evil,
And thy tongue frameth deceit.
20 Thou sittest and speakest against thy brother ;
Thou slanderest thine own mother's son.
21 These things hast thou done, and I kept silence ;
Thou thoughtest that I was altogether
such a one as thyself :
But I will reprove thee, and set them in order
before thine eyes,

(IV. *Admonition and assurance.*)

- 22 Now consider this, ye that forget God,
Lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to
deliver.
23 Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me :
And to him that ordereth his conversation aright
Will I show the salvation of God.

REFLECTIONS.

1. There is an awful majesty in these verses: they remind us of the final judgment. God has called us by His Gospel: He has shone forth upon us from His Church. As He now calls us to salvation by the voice of Mercy, so He will call us to judgment by the voice of His power. All men shall be gathered before Him: and then His righteousness shall appear.

2. If the heartless ceremonial religion of the Jew was not pleasing to God, is it not equally true that the heartless formal religion of the Christian is not pleasing to Him? What does He require of us? Thanksgiving and prayer; that religion which is in the heart, and which is expressed by the language of gratitude for

benefits received, and by the language of supplication for the blessings which we continually need. When we believe, when we pray and praise, when our piety is spiritual and practical, we glorify God ; and He will be our deliverer in all our troubles.

3. The wicked have a form of godliness ; but they are corrupt in heart and conduct. They refuse divine instruction ; and dishonesty, fraud, falsehood, and slander abound among them. They abuse God's patience and forbearance, and form the most erroneous views of Him.

4. God would not the death of a sinner. How faithfully does He here admonish and warn those who forget Him ! How clearly, and in what encouraging terms, does He put the way of life before the view of every one !

PRAYER.

O holy and glorious God, grant that we may renounce all formality and hypocrisy, and abandon every evil way. Give us grace, we beseech Thee, to worship Thee in spirit and in truth, according to the Gospel of Thy Son : and may we thank and praise Thee, and order our conversation aright ; that we may glorify Thee here, and be found unrepensible in the last day ; through Jesus Christ our only Saviour. Amen.

PSALM LI.

Penitential. Written by David after his offence in the matter of Uriah.

(I. *Prayer for pardon.*)

- 1 Have mercy upon me, O Lord,
According to Thy loving-kindness :
According unto the multitude of Thy tender mercies
Blot out my transgressions.
- 2 Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity,
And cleanse me from my sin.

(II. *Confession of sin.*)

- 3 For I acknowledge my transgressions:
And my sin is ever before me.
- 4 Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned,
And done this evil in Thy sight :
That Thou mightest be justified when Thou
speakest,
And be clear when Thou judgest.

(III. *Natural depravity: petitions.*)

- 5 Behold, I was shapen in iniquity ;
And in sin did my mother conceive me.
- 6 Behold, Thou desirest truth in the inward parts
And in the hidden part Thou shalt make me
to know wisdom.
- 7 Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean :
Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.
- 8 Make me to hear joy and gladness ;
That the bones which Thou hast broken may
rejoice.
- 9 Hide Thy face from my sins,

And blot out all mine iniquities.

- 10 Create in me a clean heart, O God;
And renew a right spirit within me.
- 11 Cast me not away from Thy presence;
And take not Thy Holy Spirit from me.
- 12 Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation;
And uphold me with Thy free Spirit.
- 13 Then will I teach transgressors Thy ways;
And sinners shall be converted unto Thee.
Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God,
Thou God of my salvation:
And my tongue shall sing aloud of Thy
righteousness.
- 15 O Lord, open Thou my lips;
And my mouth shall show forth Thy praise.

(IV. *The best sacrifice.*)

- 16 For Thou desirest not sacrifice; else would
I give it:
Thou delightest not in burnt-offerings.
- 17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit:
A broken and a contrite heart, O God,
Thou wilt not despise.

(V. *Prayer for the Church.*)

- 18 Do good in Thy good pleasure unto Zion:
Build Thou the walls of Jerusalem.
- 19 Then shalt Thou be pleased with the sacrifices
of righteousness,
With burnt-offering and whole burnt-offering:
Then shall they offer bullocks upon Thine altar.

REFLECTIONS.

1. See here, that a true penitent has a deep sense of

his sins; he earnestly prays for pardon: and he expects pardon only through the tender mercies of God in Christ Jesus. May we see and feel our sinfulness, and hasten to the fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness!

2. The true penitent does not conceal his sins, but confesses them; he does not forget them, but keeps them in his view; he does not extenuate them, but looks upon them with their aggravation. Whatever he may suffer or apprehend, he justifies the divine dealings. Oh that we may thus humble ourselves before the throne of grace!

3. We may here learn, that a true penitent has a deep sense of his natural corruption, and of the necessity, not only of pardon, but also of inward holiness. He has clear apprehensions of divine things; and his prayer is most earnest and urgent. It is to God in Christ Jesus that he looks for every blessing; for pardon and renovation; for restoration and comfort; for strength and joy. Thus he prays; and thus he looks to the time when he shall magnify the divine goodness, and praise the God of his salvation. Happy is the Christian who seeks this true piety, and is enabled to praise and glorify God for His mercy and grace.

4. The true penitent cannot rest satisfied with outward services: he is fully convinced, that what God requires in man is a broken spirit and a contrite heart; true humility and godly sorrow: and he earnestly prays, that the stony heart may be taken away, and that a heart of flesh may be given him.

5. A true penitent does not confine his attention to himself, but prays for the prosperity of the Church; that God would be gracious to it, and pour upon it the influences of His blessed Spirit, in order that its courts may be crowded with believers and converts, who shall worship Him with holy worship.

PRAYER.

O gracious God and Father, give us true repentance, that we may bewail and confess our sins, and seek the pardon of them through faith in the precious blood of Thy Son. Make us duly sensible of our corruption, and grant us the sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit, that we may be pure in heart. Being washed, and justified, and sanctified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God, may we enjoy the consolation of true religion, and rejoice in Thee and praise Thy holy name. Thus, we beseech Thee, be merciful to us and to Thy whole Church, through the merits and intercession of Jesus Christ our blessed Lord and Saviour. Amen.

PSALM LII.

Instructive, as Psalm i. David is supposed to have written this Psalm when Doeg betrayed him to Saul, and Saul slew the priests at Nob. 1 Sam. xxi. xxii.

(I. *The wicked man described.*)

1 Why boastest thou thyself in mischief, O mighty man?

The goodness of God endureth continually.

2 Thy tongue deviseth mischief;

Like a sharp razor, working deceitfully.

- 3 Thou lovest evil more than good ;
And lying rather than to speak righteousness.
4 Thou lovest all devouring words,
O thou deceitful tongue.

(II. *His doom foretold.*)

- 5 God shall likewise destroy thee for ever,
He shall take thee away,
and pluck thee out of thy dwelling-place,
And root thee out of the land of the living.

(III. *Triumph of the righteous.*)

- 6 The righteous also shall see, and fear,
And shall laugh at him :
7 Lo, this is the man that made not God his strength ;
But trusted in the abundance of his riches,
And strengthened himself in his wickedness.

(IV. *Their happiness.*)

- 8 But I am like a green olive-tree in the house
of God :
I trust in the mercy of God for ever and ever.
9 I will praise Thee for ever,
because Thou hast done it :
And I will wait on Thy Name ;
For it is good before Thy saints.

REFLECTIONS.

1. Ungodly men abuse the divine goodness ; glory in their shame ; make a perverse use of their faculties ; and thus prove and exhibit the corruption of human nature.

2. Those who persist in their wickedness will infal-

libly bring awful ruin upon themselves. The patience of God will not endure for ever. Sin will not be left unpunished.

3. God sometimes displays His righteous judgments in this world; and the wicked are suddenly cast down in the midst of their prosperity. Think, ye workers of evil, on what lies before you.

4. What a delightful contrast! The good man flourishes as a true worshipper of God, in whom he trusts, as his merciful and reconciled Father. He praises Him for His goodness, and waits upon Him in faith and patience.

PRAYER.

O blessed and gracious God, purify and renew our corrupt nature by Thy Holy Spirit, that we may keep far from the works and ways of evil-doers. May we worship Thee in Thy house of prayer, trust in Thy mercy, wait upon Thee, and praise Thee for ever; to Thy honour and glory, through Jesus Christ our Redeemer. Amen.

PSALM LIII.

DAY 10.]

EVENING PRAYER.

Instructive, as Psalm i. Author, David: see Psalm xiv.

(I. *Corruption of natural men.*)

1 The fool hath said in his heart, "There is no God."
Corrupt are they,

- And have done abominable iniquity ;
 There is none that doeth good.
- 2 God looked down from heaven
 upon the children of men,
 To see if there were any that did understand,
 That did seek God.
- 3 Every one of them is gone back :
 They are altogether become filthy ;
 There is none that doeth good, no, not one.

(II. *Their cruelty ; their destruction.*)

- 4 Have the workers of iniquity no knowledge ?
 Who eat up my people as they eat bread :
 They have not called upon God.
- 5 There were they in great fear, where no fear was ;
 For God hath scattered the bones of him
 that encampeth against Thee :
 Thou hast put them to shame,
 because God hath despised them.

(III. *Prayer for salvation.*)

- 6 Oh that the salvation of Israel were come out of
 Zion !
 When God bringeth back the captivity of His
 people,
 Jacob shall rejoice, and Israel shall be glad.

REFLECTIONS.

1. St. Paul teaches us, Rom. iii. 10, 11, that we have here a proof of human depravity and guilt. Oh what a vile creature is man when he casts off the fear of God, and follows his own devices !

2. Without knowledge, cruel, persecuting, and un-

devout; such are the wicked; and their portion is terror and desolation. Why should the righteous fear, who have God for their defender?

3. Pray we always that the Church may prosper, that salvation may go forth from her to all the world, and that her faithful children may rejoice in God their Saviour, being delivered from the power of all their enemies.

PRAYER.

Convince all men, O Lord, of their depravity, sin, and folly, and give them true repentance, and faith in Christ. Mercifully prosper and protect Thy Church, and grant that Thy people may rejoice in Thee, through the same Thy Son Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

PSALM LIV.

Prayer, as Psalm iii. Written, probably, by David, when persecuted by Saul.

(I. *Praise.*)

- 1 Save me, O God, by Thy Name,
And judge me by Thy strength.
- 2 Hear my prayer, O God;
Give ear to the words of my mouth.

(II. *Complaint.*)

- 3 For strangers are risen up against me,
And oppressors seek after my soul:
They have not set God before them.

(III. *Confidence.*)

- 4 Behold, God is my helper:

The Lord is with them that uphold my soul.

5 He shall reward evil unto mine enemies :

Cut them off in Thy truth.

(IV. *Thanksgiving.*)

6 I will freely sacrifice unto Thee :

I will praise Thy name, O Lord ;

For it is good.

7 For He hath delivered me out of all trouble :

And mine eye hath seen his desire upon mine
enemies.

REFLECTIONS.

David prays that God would save him, defend his cause, and hear his prayer. He complains of persons who were seeking his life. His prayer brings faith into exercise : then he sees that God is his Helper, and that his enemies will be overthrown. The convictions of faith lead to thanksgiving and praise. Such are some of the exercises of a pious soul.

PRAYER.

O Lord, whoever rise up against us, grant that we may look to Thee, call upon Thee, and confide in Thee. Help us and uphold us in all our ways, and keep us in perfect safety, that we may praise Thy Name for ever, through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

PSALM LV.

Prayer, as Psalm iv. Written by David, probably, during the rebellion of Absalom.

(I. Prayer in distress.)

- 1 Give ear to my prayer, O God ;
And hide not Thyself from my supplication.
- 2 Attend unto me, and hear me :
I mourn in my complaint and make a noise ;
- 3 Because of the voice of the enemy,
Because of the oppression of the wicked :
For they cast iniquity upon me,
And in wrath they hate me.
- 4 My heart is sore pained within me :
And the terrors of death are fallen upon me.
- 5 Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me,
And horror hath overwhelmed me.
- 6 And I said, " Oh that I had the wings of a dove !"
For then would I fly away, and be at rest.
- 7 Lo, then would I wander far off,
And remain in the wilderness.
- 8 I would hasten my escape
From the windy storm and tempest.

(II. Conduct of enemies.)

- 9 Destroy, O Lord, and divide their tongues :
For I have seen violence and strife in the city.
- 10 Day and night they go about it
upon the walls thereof:
Mischief, also, and sorrow are in the midst of it.
- 11 Wickedness is in the midst thereof:
Deceit and guile depart not from her streets.

- 12 For it was not an enemy that reproached me ;
Then I could have borne it :
Neither was it he that hated me
that did magnify himself against me ;
Then I could have hid myself from him.
- 13 But it was thou, a man mine equal,
My guide and mine acquaintance.
- 14 We took sweet counsel together,
And walked into the house of God in company.

(III. Their ruin : the good man's confidence.)

- 15 Let death seize upon them,
And let them go down quick into hell :
For wickedness is in their dwellings and among
them.
- 16 As for me, I will call upon God ;
And the Lord shall save me.
- 17 Evening, and morning, and at noon,
Will I pray, and cry aloud :
And He shall hear my voice.
- 18 He hath delivered my soul in peace
From the battle that was against me :
For there were many with me.
- 19 God shall hear, and afflict them,
Even He that abideth of old.
Because they have no changes,
Therefore they fear not God.
- 20 He hath put forth his hands
Against such as be at peace with him :
He hath broken his covenant.
- 21 The words of his mouth were smother than butter,
But war was in his heart :

His words were softer than oil,
Yet were they drawn swords.

(IV. *Admonition to faith.*)

- 22 Cast thy burden upon the Lord,
And He shall sustain thee :
He shall never suffer the righteous to be moved.
- 23 But Thou, O God, shall bring them down
into the pit of destruction :
Bloody and deceitful men shall not live out
half their days :
But I will trust in Thee.

REFLECTIONS.

1. David was acquainted with grief and trouble: our blessed Lord also endured the "contradiction of sinners against Himself." If we walk in the same path, and drink of the same cup, why should we be "wearied and faint" in our minds? We must offer to God our earnest prayers; and then we shall bear with composure the storm and tempest: and the time is not distant when we shall escape from them.

2. David saw the confusion of Jerusalem, the cruelty of Absalom, and the treachery of Ahithophel. Our blessed Lord saw the rage of the Jews, and the treachery of Judas. If we experience the cruelty and deceit of men, let us not fail to possess our souls in patience.

3. What a contrast do we see here between the good and the wicked! How awful is the end of all the workers of iniquity! For a season they prosper.

They "have no changes" nor trials; but their end will be destruction. But how happy and safe is the good man! He prays; he is heard; and he enjoys deliverance and peace.

4. It is alike the duty and happiness of the believer to trust in God; to commit himself and his cause to Him. While awful judgments hang over the workers of evil, God will sustain him, and never suffer him to be moved.

PRAYER.

O blessed God, whatever be the perverse and unjust conduct of wicked men, grant that we may call upon Thee, trust in Thee, and patiently wait the fulfilment of Thy will. Mercifully support us in all trials; suffer us not to be moved from the steadfastness of our faith; that we may adorn our Christian profession, and praise Thy name for ever, through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

PSALM LVI.

DAY 11.]

MORNING PRAYER.

Prayer, as Psalm iii. Author, David. This Psalm refers to his enemies in the court of Saul.

(I. *Prayer.*)

- 1 Be merciful unto me, O God:
For man would swallow me up;
He fighting daily oppresseth me.
- 2 Mine enemies would daily swallow me up:

For they be many that fight against me,
O Thou most High.

(II. *Confidence.*)

- 3 What time I am afraid,
I will trust in Thee.
4 In God I will praise His word,
In God I have put my trust;
I will not fear what flesh can do unto me.

(III. *Conduct of enemies.*)

- 5 Every day they wrest my words;
All their thoughts are against me for evil.
6 They gather themselves together,
they hide themselves,
They mark my steps, when they wait for my soul.

(IV. *Confidence in God.*)

- 7 Shall they escape by iniquity?
In Thine anger cast down the people, O God.
8 Thou tellest my wanderings:
Put Thou my tears into Thy bottle:
Are they not in Thy book?
9 When I cry unto Thee,
Then shall mine enemies turn back:
This I know; for God is for me.
10 In God will I praise His word:
In the Lord will I praise His word.
11 In God have I put my trust:
I will not be afraid what man can do unto me.

(V. *Praise.*)

- 12 Thy vows are upon me, O God:
I will render praises unto Thee.

13 For Thou hast delivered my soul from death :
Wilt not Thou deliver my feet from falling,
That I may walk before God
in the light of the living ?

REFLECTIONS.

1. The good man may have many enemies ; but God is his refuge, and to Him he looks for mercy and protection. Man's wrath will do us no harm, if God's mercy be with us.

2. Danger produces fear ; but if we trust in God and in His word, we shall banish fear, and praise our Almighty Protector. Trust in God is our safety, comfort, and joy.

3. Misconstruction of our words, cruel devices, and perverse scrutiny of our conduct, can hardly fail to be more or less our lot upon earth. In such circumstances we must not think that any strange thing befalls us.

4. What is the support of the righteous amidst their troubles ? God graciously regards the trials and sorrows of His people ; He will subdue their enemies ; remove their fears ; and fill their hearts with gratitude and praise.

5. The true Christian remembers his vows, by which he has engaged to be God's faithful servant. He remembers God's past dealings towards him with gratitude, and looks to the future with confidence : and as God will deliver him and uphold him, so will he celebrate the praises of his faithful and almighty Benefactor.

PRAYER.

O blessed God, whatever be the troubles of this mortal life, enable us to trust in Thee; and grant that we may always experience Thy goodness in our protection and deliverance. May we always remember our vows, and be faithful to them. Through Thy grace may our feet be kept from falling; and grant that we may walk before Thee in the light of the living, to the glory of Thy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PSALM LVII.

Prayer, as Psalm iii. Author, David: written, probably, when he was persecuted by Saul: 1 Sam. xxiv.

(I. Prayer and trust.)

- 1 Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me:
For my soul trusteth in Thee:
Yea, in the shadow of Thy wings
will I make my refuge,
Until these calamities be overpast.
- 2 I will cry unto God most High;
Unto God that performeth all things for me.
- 3 He shall send from heaven, and save me
From the reproach of him that would swallow
me up.
God shall send forth His mercy and His truth.

(II. Dangers.)

- 4 My soul is among lions: and I lie
Even among them that are set on fire,
even the sons of men,

Whose teeth are spears and arrows,
And their tongue a sharp sword.

(III. *Prayer.*)

- 5 Be Thou exalted, O God, above the heavens ;
Let Thy glory be above all the earth.

(IV. *Adversaries punished.*)

- 6 They have prepared a net for my steps ;
My soul is bowed down :
They have digged a pit before me,
Into the midst whereof they are fallen themselves.

(V. *Praise.*)

- 7 My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed :
I will sing and give praise.
8 Awake up, my glory ;
Awake, psaltery and harp :
I myself will awake early.
9 I will praise Thee, O Lord, among the people :
I will sing unto Thee among the nations.
10 For Thy mercy is great unto the heavens,
And Thy truth unto the clouds.

(VI. *Prayer repeated.*)

- 11 Be Thou exalted, O God, above the heavens,
Let Thy glory be above all the earth.

REFLECTIONS.

1. The pious may experience much tribulation : they may see days full of calamities. But they trust in God ; they call upon Him ; and they seek protection under the sheltering wing of His providence. Thus believing and dev out, they are fully assured that

they shall have abundant proof of His mercy and faithfulness.

2, 3, 4. Our enemies may be numerous, strong, and cruel: but our Defender is almighty; and His glory will be made conspicuous by the overthrow of the wicked, and by the preservation of His faithful people.

5. He whose heart is stedfast in faith may engage in the joyful work of praise and thanksgiving, even in the midst of trouble. He will remember the unbounded mercy and the unchanging truth of God; and thus his heart will be filled with gladness.

6. It is the prayer of the believer, that God may be exalted and glorified by the praises of all His intelligent creatures; that He may be known in the Gospel through all the world, and that men and angels may celebrate His perfections.

PRAYER.

Grant, O Lord, that in all our calamities, whatever be our trials, and whoever be our enemies, we may call upon Thee, and put our entire confidence in Thy mercy and truth. Being safe under Thy protection, may we evermore praise Thy holy Name, through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

PSALM LVIII.

Instructive, as Psalm i. David wrote this Psalm, perhaps, in reference to Saul and his wicked counsellors.

(I. *Reproof.*)

- 1 Do ye indeed speak righteousness, O congregation?
Do ye judge uprightly, O ye sons of men?
- 2 Yea, in heart ye work wickedness;
Ye weigh the violence of your hands in the earth.

(II. *The wicked described.*)

- 3 The wicked are estranged from the womb :
They go astray as soon as they be born, speaking
lies.
- 4 Their poison is like the poison of a serpent :
They are like the deaf adder that stoppeth her ear ;
- 5 Which will not hearken to the voice of charmers,
Charming never so wisely.

(III. *Their ruin.*)

- 6 Break their teeth, O God, in their mouth :
Break out the great teeth of the young lions,
O Lord.
- 7 Let them melt away
As waters which run continually :
When he bendeth his bow to shoot his arrows,
Let them be as cut in pieces.
- 8 As a snail which melteth,
let every one of them pass away :
Like the untimely birth of a woman,
that they may not see the sun.
- 9 Before your pots can feel the thorns,

He shall take them away as with a whirlwind,
Both living, and in His wrath.

(IV. *Joy of the righteous.*)

- 10 The righteous shall rejoice
when he seeth the vengeance :
He shall wash his feet in the blood of the wicked.

(V. *The divine equity.*)

- 11 So that a man shall say,
Verily there is a reward for the righteous :
Verily He is a God that judgeth in the earth.

REFLECTIONS.

1. The corrupt administration of justice is an evil that exists in our fallen world. Our words should be truth, and our decisions should be equity : but how often does the heart meditate evil, and the lips pronounce an unjust sentence !

2. We have full proof of the depravity of man even from his earliest years. Falsehood in language, angry and malignant passions, self-will and incorrigible obstinacy, are some of the bitter fruits of our native corruption. Such is man without divine grace.

3. The wicked will do well to remember, that there is One who can break their power in a moment, and render them feeble and inefficient, or suddenly remove them from their place. They may for a season make many around them to tremble : but can they themselves stand in the day of God's displeasure ?

4. The righteous proceedings of God will inspire

the souls of His servants with joy; not that they rejoice in the sufferings of any persons whatever, but in the manifestation of the divine perfections.

5. Apparent confusion exists under the present administration of Divine Providence: we see a part, and not the whole; the beginning and the progress, but not the end; but we may be fully assured, that God will finally be justified by all His creatures; who will see and avow that all His ways are equal.

PRAYER.

We acknowledge, O Lord, the corruption of our nature; and we beseech Thee to renew us by Thy Holy Spirit, that we may be pure in heart, and upright in our dealings. Grant that we may do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with Thee in faith, fear, and love; that, when Thou shalt judge the world, in righteousness, we may be approved in Thy sight, and received into the mansions of eternal life, through the merits and intercession of Thy Son Jesus Christ our only Saviour. Amen.

PSALM LIX.

DAY 11.]

EVENING PRAYER.

Prayer, as Psalm iv. David wrote this Psalm when persecuted by Saul.

(1. *Prayer.*)

- 1 Deliver me from mine enemies, O my God :
Defend me from them that rise up against me.
- 2 Deliver me from the workers of iniquity,
And save me from bloody men.

(II. Conduct of wicked men.)

- 3 For, lo, they lie in wait for my soul :
The mighty are gathered against me ;
Not for my transgression, nor for my sin, O Lord.
- 4 They run and prepare themselves without my fault :
Awake to help me, and behold.
- 5 Thou therefore, O Lord God of hosts,
The God of Israel,
Awake to visit all the heathen :
Be not merciful to any wicked transgressors.
- 6 They return at evening :
They make a noise like a dog,
And go round about the city.
- 7 Behold, they belch out with their mouth :
Swords are in their lips :
For who, say they, doth hear ?
- 8 But Thou, O Lord, shalt laugh at them ;
Thou shalt have all the heathen in derision.
- 9 Because of his strength will I wait upon Thee ;
For God is my defence.
- 10 The God of my mercy shall prevent me ;
God shall let me see my desire upon mine enemies.

(III. Their punishment.)

- 11 Slay them not, lest my people forget :
Scatter them by Thy power,
And bring them down, O Lord our Shield.
- 12 For the sin of their mouth and the words of their
lips
Let them even be taken in their pride :
And for cursing and lying which they speak.
- 13 Consume them in wrath,

Consume them, that they may not be :
 And let them know that God ruleth in Jacob
 Unto the ends of the earth.

- 14 And at evening let them return;
 And let them make a noise like a dog,
 And go round about the city.
- 15 Let them wander up and down for meat,
 And grudge if they be not satisfied

(IV. *Praise.*)

- 16 But I will sing of Thy power ;
 Yea, I will sing aloud of Thy mercy in the morning :
 For Thou hast been my defence
 And refuge in the day of my trouble.
- 17 Unto Thee, O my Strength, will I sing ;
 For God is my defence,
 And the God of my mercy.

REFLECTIONS.

We are beset with enemies in this world, both temporal and spiritual : and it is to God only that we are to look for defence, preservation, and safety. The character and conduct of ungodly men is here described in very dark colours ; and we are led to a painful and humiliating view of human nature. But whatever be the folly, rage, and impiety of such men, God will be the Defender of His people. Not only so ; for iniquity will not go unpunished : the proud, the clamorous, and the cruel will find, that He who “ruleth in Jacob,” and “unto the ends of the earth,” will avenge His people, and overthrow their adversaries. Well, then, may the people of God rejoice : for whatever may be their present troubles, they shall be defended, and

therefore may sing aloud of the divine power and mercy. Surely those little need regard the wrath of man, who enjoy the favour of God.

PRAYER.

Whatever, O Lord, be our troubles in this world, and whoever our enemies may be, grant that we may always look up to Thee for protection and deliverance. Have mercy upon the ungodly, and bring them to true repentance: and grant that Thy people may rejoice in Thy goodness, and celebrate Thy power and mercy; through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

PSALM LX.

Prayer, as Psalm xliv. Author, David. The Psalm may describe the state of things from the death of Saul till David was king over all Israel.

(I. Israel's sufferings.)

- 1 O God, Thou hast cast us off,
Thou hast scattered us,
Thou hast been displeased;
O turn Thyself to us again.
- 2 Thou hast made the earth to tremble;
Thou hast broken it:
Heal the breaches thereof: for it shaketh.
- 3 Thou hast showed Thy people hard things;
Thou hast made us to drink the wine of astonishment.

(II. Israel led to victory.)

- 4 Thou hast given a banner to them that fear Thee,

- That it may be displayed because of the truth.
5 That Thy beloved may be delivered;
Save with Thy right hand, and hear me.
6 God hath spoken in His holiness;
I will rejoice, I will divide Shechem,
And mete out the valley of Succoth.

(III. *Other tribes join the standard.*)

- 7 Gilead is mine, and Manasseh is mine;
Ephraim also is the strength of my head;
Judah is my lawgiver:

(IV. *Enemies subdued.*)

- 8 Moab is my washpot;
Over Edom will I cast out my shoe:
Philistia, triumph thou because of me.
9 Who will bring me unto the strong city?
Who will lead me unto Edom?
10 Wilt not Thou, O God, which hadst cast us off?
And Thou, O God, which didst not go out
with our armies?

(V. *Prayer.*)

- 11 Give us help from trouble:
For vain is the help of man.

(VI. *Confidence in God.*)

- 12 Through God we shall do valiantly:
For He it is that shall tread down our enemies.

REFLECTIONS.

1. By sin we incur the divine displeasure, and this brings down upon us national judgments. Then we experience hard things, and drink the wine of astonish-

ment. In such a case, the pious humble themselves before God, and implore His mercy and favour.

2. The Psalmist had consolation : Israel was punished, but not forsaken : and their God would defend and deliver them, and assign to them their inheritance. Thus the Church now looks, in all her troubles, to her ever-living Head, and depends on His power and goodness.

3. The Psalmist looked with delight on the union of Israel : and the Christian wishes to see union in the Church ; one fold and one Shepherd.

4. The Psalmist looks on the enemies of Israel as about to be subdued. We should rejoice in the triumphs of the Gospel, and anticipate the submission of all nations to it. In this great work we acknowledge the immediate power of God.

5, 6. Whatever our troubles may be, we must look to God, and not to man. If we pray to Him, and trust in Him, we may be persuaded that we shall do valiantly, and be more than conquerors through our almighty Helper.

PRAYER.

Punish us not, O Lord, as our sins deserve, but be merciful to us, and give us repentance and forgiveness. Be favourable to us, for Thine own Name's sake. Make Thy Church to prosper in the world ; and grant that all Christians may be more and more of one mind and heart. May they conquer their enemies, and in all things glorify Thee, through Jesus Christ our only Saviour. Amen.

PSALM LXI.

Prayer, as Psalm iii. Written, probably, by David during the rebellion of Absalom.

(I. *Prayer.*)

- 1 Hear my cry, O God,
Attend unto my prayer.
- 2 From the end of the earth will I cry unto Thee,
When my heart is overwhelmed:
Lead me to the rock that is higher than I.

(II. *Trust from past experience.*)

- 3 For Thou hast been a shelter for me,
And a strong tower from the enemy.
- 4 I will abide in Thy tabernacle for ever ;
I will trust in the covert of Thy wings.
- 5 For Thou, O God, hast heard my vows :
Thou hast given me the heritage of those
that fear Thy Name.
- 6 Thou wilt prolong the King's life :
And his years as many generations.
- 7 He shall abide before God for ever :
Oh prepare mercy and truth, which may preserve
him.

(III. *Resolve.*)

- 8 So will I sing praise unto Thy Name for ever,
That I may daily perform my vows.

REFLECTIONS.

1. When the good man is overwhelmed in the day of trouble, faith looks to the Rock of ages, and devotion prays that the soul may be established upon it.

2. The Christian has found God to be his strength and comfort, and therefore determines to trust in Him and to worship Him. The divine favour is his portion; future glory is his inheritance: and in the contemplation and persuasion of these, he rejoices with unfeigned gratitude. He looks to Christ, the ever-living King of his Church: prays for the experience of the divine mercy and truth; and encourages himself with the delightful thought, that he shall abide before God for ever.

3. And let such be our resolve and our conduct. God has dealt bountifully with us: and shall not we delight to praise Him? We have made vows: and shall we not carefully perform them?

PRAYER.

O gracious God, when our hearts are overwhelmed, may we look to Thee, the rock of our salvation, call upon Thee, and put all our trust in Thee. Give us, we beseech Thee, the heritage of those that fear Thy Name: and while we experience Thy mercy and truth, may we declare Thy praise, perform our vows, and so live in faith and obedience that we may abide before Thee for ever, through the merits and intercession of Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour. Amen.

PSALM LXII.

DAY 12.]

MORNING PRAYER.

Praise as Psalm iii. Written, probably, by David, on the same occasion as the preceding Psalm.

(I. Confidence in God.)

- 1 Truly my soul waiteth upon God:
From Him cometh my salvation.
- 2 He only is my rock and my salvation.
He is my defence; I shall not be greatly moved.

(II. Conduct of the wicked.)

- 3 How long will ye imagine mischief
against a man?
Ye shall be slain all of you:
As a bowing wall shall ye be,
and as a tottering fence.
- 4 They only consult to cast him down from his
excellency:
They delight in lies:
They bless with their mouth,
But they curse inwardly.

(III. An act of faith.)

- 5 My soul, wait thou only upon God;
For my expectation is from Him.
- 6 He only is my rock and my salvation:
He is my defence; I shall not be moved.
- 7 In God is my salvation and my glory:
The rock of my strength, and my refuge, is in
God.

(IV. *Admonition.*)

- 8 Trust in Him at all times, ye people,
Pour out your heart before Him :
God is a refuge for us.

(V. *No trust in worldly things.*)

- 9 Surely men of low degree are vanity,
And men of high degree are a lie :
To be laid in the balance,
They are altogether lighter than vanity.
10 Trust not in oppression,
And become not vain in robbery :
If riches increase, set not your heart upon them.

(VI. *Power and mercy belong to God.*)

- 11 God hath spoken once ;
Twice have I heard this ;
That power belongeth unto God.
12 Also unto Thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy :
For Thou renderest to every man
according to his work.

REFLECTIONS.

1. Here we see the faith, patience, and confidence of the truly good man. He knows God ; looks to Him ; waits upon Him ; and enjoys the persuasion that he shall not be greatly moved, not overthrown.

2. The Church has her enemies, and they are full of hypocrisy, falsehood, and evil devices. But those who oppose God and His people will not long prosper: confusion and ruin lie before them.

3. A soul that is strong in faith will encourage

itself in God, from whom is all its expectation of support and deliverance, and whom it magnifies with adoring praise. If, O Lord, we have the believer's troubles, may we also have the believer's peace and joy.

4. What is the Christian's assurance? God is our refuge. What is the Christian's duty? Always to believe, and earnestly to pray.

5. If we trust in men, whether low or high; if we trust in oppression and injustice; if we set our hearts on increasing wealth as our security and glory; we shall soon find that we have only prepared shame and confusion for ourselves; for the time will come when the vanity of all such confidence must be felt.

6. God hath spoken to us in His word again and again: and what do we learn from it? That power, mercy, and justice belong to Him. Power protects us; mercy pardons us; and justice renders to every man according to his work.

PRAYER.

O blessed God, whatever be our troubles in this sinful world, grant us grace to look to Thee, to wait upon Thee, and to expect all good from Thee. Deliver us from all vain confidences. To Thy almighty power may we look for protection: to Thy mercy in Christ Jesus may we look for pardon: and help us so to live in holiness, and obedience, that, when Thou shalt render to every man according to his work, we may stand approved in Thy sight, through the same Thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PSALM LXIII.

Prayer, as Psalm xlii. Written by David, probably, on the same occasion as the preceding.

(I. Thirst for God.)

- 1 O God, Thou art my God ; early will I seek Thee :
My soul thirsteth for Thee,
my flesh longeth for Thee
In a dry and thirsty land, where no water is ;
- 2 To see Thy power and Thy glory,
So as I have seen Thee in the sanctuary.

(II. Praise.)

- 3 Because Thy lovingkindness is better than life,
My lips shall praise Thee.
- 4 Thus will I bless Thee while I live :
I will lift up my hands in Thy Name.
- 5 My soul shall be satisfied
as with marrow and fatness ;
And my mouth shall praise Thee with joyful lips :
- 6 When I remember Thee upon my bed,
And meditate on Thee in the night watches.
- 7 Because Thou hast been my help,
Therefore in the shadow of Thy wings will I rejoice.
- 8 My soul followeth hard after Thee ;
Thy right hand upholdeth me.

(III. Ruin of the wicked.)

- 9 But those that seek my soul, to destroy it,
Shall go into the lower parts of the earth.
- 10 They shall fall by the sword :
They shall be a portion for foxes.

(IV. Triumph of the believer.)

- 11 But the King shall rejoice in God ;
Every one that sweareth by Him shall glory :
But the mouth of them that speak lies
shall be stopped.

REFLECTIONS.

1. A good man seeks the knowledge and the favour of God with intense desire ; delights in His worship on earth ; and looks forward to everlasting glory and blessedness. He does not seek his happiness from the world : the power and glory of God in Christ Jesus are the things which he wishes to see and understand.

2. The good man has joy in all his trials ; for he knows the divine goodness, remembers God, meditates on Him, calls upon Him, is satisfied with the communication of His mercy and grace, and therefore praises Him with joyful lips. Past experience produces confidence with regard to the future. He cleaves to God in mind and heart, and is upheld in his pious course by an almighty power.

3, 4. The wicked shall perish ; their devices shall fail, and only bring confusion on themselves : they shall soon be put to silence. But the righteous shall rejoice in Him whom they revere and honour. Shame and ruin await the ungodly ; but joy and triumph await the true worshippers and faithful servants of God.

PRAYER.

O Lord our God, fill our souls, we beseech Thee, with earnest desires to know and love Thee, and to

find our happiness in Thee. Grant that we may see Thy power and glory ; uphold us in the way of righteousness ; and may our souls cleave to Thee, that we may bless and praise Thee now and evermore, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PSALM LXIV.

Prayer, as Psalm iv. Written by David, probably, when persecuted either by Saul or Absalom.

(I. Prayer.)

- 1 Hear my voice, O God, in my prayer :
Preserve my life from fear of the enemy.
- 2 Hide me from the secret counsel of the wicked ;
From the insurrection of the workers of iniquity :

(II. Conduct of the wicked.)

- 3 Who whet their tongue like a sword,
And bend their bows to shoot their arrows,
even bitter words :
- 4 That they may shoot in secret at the perfect :
Suddenly do they shoot at him, and fear not.
- 5 They encourage themselves in an evil matter :
They commune of laying snares privily ;
They say, Who shall see them ?
- 6 They search out iniquities ;
They accomplish a diligent search :
Both the inward thought of every one of them,
and the heart, is deep.

(III. Their fall.)

- 7 But God shall shoot at them with an arrow ;

- Suddenly shall they be wounded,
8 So shall they make their own tongue
to fall upon themselves :
All that see them shall flee away.
9 And all men shall fear,
And shall declare the work of God ;
For they shall wisely consider of His doing.

(IV. *Joy of the righteous.*)

- 10 The righteous shall be glad in the Lord,
And shall trust in Him ;
And all the upright in heart shall glory.

REFLECTIONS.

1. The Church has always need to pray against the secret counsels and violent deeds of the ungodly. Every one has need to pray daily for preservation.

2. How often have the powers of the world plotted against the true followers of Christ ! Their malice, art, counsels, and activity are here vividly portrayed ; and surely we cannot think of them without seeing what we owe to God for peace and safety.

3. The power, truth, and goodness of God will be seen in the overthrow of the wicked. Their own evil and crafty counsels shall be turned against themselves : and the punishment inflicted upon them will fill those around them with fear, who shall own in it the work of the just and holy God.

4. Though the righteous may be afflicted for a season, yet it becomes them to be thankful and to rejoice. Firm in their confidence, and upright in heart and conduct, they may be assured that God will bless and

preserve them, and in due time deliver them from all their enemies.

PRAYER.

Preserve, O Lord, Thy Church from all her adversaries. Frustrate their counsels, restrain their power, and grant that Thy faithful people may rejoice in Thee. Grant that all men may wisely consider Thy righteous dealings, and fear Thee, and turn to Thee; to the glory of Thy Name, through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

PSALM LXV.

DAY 12.]

EVENING PRAYER.

Thanksgiving, as Psalm xli. A Psalm of David, being a general hymn of praise for rain and fruitful seasons.

(I. *Praise for divine grace.*)

- 1 Praise waiteth for Thee, O God, in Zion :
And unto Thee shall the vow be performed.
- 2 O Thou that hearest prayer,
Unto Thee shall all flesh come.
- 3 Iniquities prevail against me :
As for our transgressions,
Thou shalt purge them away.
- 4 Blessed is the man whom Thou choosest,
And causest to approach unto Thee,
That he may dwell in Thy courts :
We shall be satisfied with the goodness of Thy
house,
Even of Thy holy temple.

(II. Praise for divine power.)

- 5 By terrible things in righteousness
wilt Thou answer us,
O God of our salvation ;
Who art the confidence of all the ends of the earth,
And of them that are afar off upon the sea:
6 Which by His strength setteth fast the mountains ;
Being girded with power.
7 Which stilleth the noise of the seas,
The noise of their waves,
and the tumult of the people.
8 They also that dwell in the uttermost parts
are afraid of Thy tokens ;
Thou makest the outgoing of the morning
and evening to rejoice.

(III. Praise for the divine providence.)

- 9 Thou visitest the earth, and waterest it :
Thou greatly enrichest it
With the river of God, which is full of water :
Thou preparest them corn,
When Thou hast so provided for it.
10 Thou waterest the ridges thereof abundantly :
Thou settlest the furrows thereof :
Thou makest it soft with showers :
Thou blessest the springing thereof :
11 Thou crownest the year with Thy goodness ;
And Thy paths drop fatness.
12 They drop upon the pastures of the wilderness :
And the little hills rejoice on every side.
13 The pastures are clothed with flocks ;
The valleys also are covered over with corn ;
They shout for joy, they also sing.

REFLECTIONS.

1. The true worshipper of God is the blessed man; for he draws near to God in His house of prayer; praises Him, calls upon Him, confesses his sins to Him, and obtains the blessings of pardon and peace: he is satisfied with the divine goodness: he is instructed, strengthened, and comforted in the holy ordinances of the Church.

2. What a subject for joyful meditation is the power of God. We look to the hills, to the waves of the sea, to the rising and setting sun, and to the restrained passions of men, and we have abundant proof of it. And this Almighty Being is our confidence and the God of our salvation. How great is our security! What abundant reason have we to rejoice!

3. As God is infinite in power, so is He infinite in goodness. What a delightful view is here given us of His bounty in providing for our temporal wants! The descending showers, the springing and flourishing corn, the plenty that crowns the hills and vales, and even the wilderness, plainly manifest His care of us. But these things are only a part of His ways; and they ought to lead us to consider blessings of a higher order.

PRAYER.

O Almighty God, infinite in power and goodness, while we thank and praise Thee for the bounties of Thy providence, grant that we may seek and enjoy the blessings of Thy mercy and grace in Christ Jesus. Grant that we may be satisfied with the goodness of

Thy house, praise Thy holy Name, and live to Thy glory, through the same Thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PSALM LXVI.

Thanksgiving, as Psalm xli. Some refer this Psalm to the days of David ; others to those of Hezekiah.

(I. Exhortation to praise.)

- 1 Make a joyful noise unto God, all ye lands :
- 2 Sing forth the honour of His Name :
Make His praise glorious.
- 3 Say unto God,
“How terrible art Thou in Thy works !
“Through the greatness of Thy power
“Shall Thine enemies submit themselves unto
Thee.
- 4 “All the earth shall worship Thee,
“And shall sing unto Thee ; they shall sing to Thy
Name.”

(II. Deliverance of the Church.)

- 5 Come and see the works of God :
He is terrible in His doing toward the children of
men.
- 6 He turned the sea into dry land :
They went through the flood on foot :
There did we rejoice in Him.
- 7 He ruleth by His power for ever ;
His eyes behold the nations ;
Let not the rebellious exalt themselves.

- 8 O bless our God, ye people,
And make the voice of His praise to be heard ;
9 Which holdeth our soul in life,
And suffereth not our feet to be moved.
10 For Thou, O God, hast proved us ;
Thou hast tried us, as silver is tried.
11 Thou broughtest us into the net ;
Thou laidst affliction upon our loins.
12 Thou hast caused men to ride over our heads ;
We went through fire and through water ;
But Thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place.

(III. *Religious service.*)

- 13 I will go into Thy house with burnt offerings :
I will pay Thee my vows,
14 Which my lips have uttered,
And my mouth hath spoken, when I was in trouble.
15 I will offer unto Thee burnt sacrifices of fatlings,
with the incense of rams ;
I will offer bullocks with goats.

(IV. *God's special goodness declared.*)

- 16 Come and hear, all ye that fear God,
And I will declare what He hath done for my soul.
17 I cried unto Him with my mouth,
And He was extolled with my tongue.
18 If I regard iniquity in my heart,
The Lord will not hear me ;
19 But verily God hath heard me ;
He hath attended to the voice of my prayer.
20 Blessed be God,
Which hath not turned away my prayer,
Nor His mercy from me.

REFLECTIONS.

1. All the works and ways of God furnish matter for praise. It is by His power that enemies are overthrown, and that the hearts of men are brought to the obedience of faith. We ought to consider this, and to “sing forth the honour of HisNa me.”

2. Here we are instructed how to meditate on the divine dealings. The power of God was shown in the deliverance of Israel; in their support, and in vanquishing their enemies: and it is equally manifested in the deliverance, support, and trials of the Church, and of every member of it. Tribulation is our lot; for we must be tried: but God is with us when we pass even through fire and water, and He will bring us into a wealthy place; to His promised rest. Shall we not, therefore, praise Him?

3. In affliction we make vows: in prosperity let us perform them. Public worship is a most important duty; and our experience of the divine goodness should induce us to engage in it with unfeigned gratitude.

4. The true Christian can speak of the goodness of God to himself. He has prayed to God; he has praised Him; he has expelled iniquity from his heart, cherishing no sin in his breast: and he has been heard, and answered, and preserved, and blessed by the God of all mercy and blessing.

PRAYER.

O gracious and glorious God, infinite in power and mercy, grant that we may consider Thy works, and praise Thy Name. Whatever be our trials and afflic-

tions, may we be fully persuaded of Thy goodness; persevere in prayer; banish sin from our hearts; and then thankfully declare Thy lovingkindness, and magnify Thy power and mercy towards us; through Jesus Christ our only Lord and Saviour. Amen.

PSALM LXVII.

Prayer, as Psalm xx. Author and occasion unknown. It may be viewed as foretelling the conversion of the Gentiles.

(I. *Prayer and praise.*)

- 1 God be merciful unto us, and bless us;
And cause His face to shine upon us;
- 2 That Thy way may be known upon earth,
Thy saving health among all nations.
- 3 Let the people praise Thee, O God;
Let all the people praise Thee.
- 4 O let the nations be glad and sing for joy:
For Thou shalt judge the people righteously,
And govern the nations upon earth.
- 5 Let the people praise Thee, O God;
Let all the people praise Thee.
- 6 Then shall the earth yield her increase;
And God, even our own God, shall bless us.
- 7 God shall bless us;
And all the ends of the earth shall fear Him.

REFLECTIONS.

In ver. 1, 2, we see one branch of our duty. We are to pray; to pray for the divine mercy, blessing, and favour, and also for the universal diffusion of the

Gospel. In ver. 3—5, we see another branch of our duty. We are to praise God; to praise Him as the righteous Judge, and as the Ruler who presides over all nations. His government over all, and His righteous administration, furnish matter for constant admiration and praise.

In ver. 6, 7, we see the result of prayer and praise. We shall enjoy temporal and spiritual blessings; and true religion, with all its happy fruits, shall abound in the world.

PRAYER.

Be merciful unto us, O Lord, and bless us, and visit us with Thy favour. Send forth Thy Gospel, we beseech Thee, into all the world, that the way of life and salvation may be universally known: and while we contemplate Thy righteous government and gracious dealings, may we praise and magnify Thy Holy Name. May it please Thee thus to prosper and extend Thy Church, to Thy honour and glory, and to the happiness of mankind, through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

PSALM LXVIII.

DAY 13.]

MORNING PRAYER.

Prophetical. David wrote this Psalm, probably, at the removal of the ark to mount Zion from the house of Obed-edom. In a spiritual view it relates to the ascension of Christ and to the victories of truth.

(I. *Messiah rising and conquering.*)

- 1 Let God arise; let His enemies be scattered:
Let them also that hate Him flee before Him.

- 2 As smoke is driven away, so drive them away :
As wax melted before the fire,
So let the wicked perish at the presence of God.

(II. *Joy and consolation.*)

- 3 But let the righteous be glad ;
Let them rejoice before God :
Yea, let them exceedingly rejoice.
4 Sing unto God, sing praises to His Name :
Extol Him that rideth upon the heavens
By His name JAH, and rejoice before Him.
5 A father of the fatherless,
And a judge of the widows,
Is God in His holy habitation.
6 God setteth the solitary in families :
He bringeth out those which are bound with chains :
But the rebellious dwell in a dry land.

(III. *God's care of His Church.*)

- 7 O God, when Thou wentest forth before Thy
people,
When Thou didst march through the wilderness ;
8 The earth shook,
The heavens also dropped at the presence of God :
Even Sinai itself was moved
At the presence of God, the God of Israel.
9 Thou, O God, didst send a plentiful rain
Whereby Thou didst confirm Thine inheritance,
when it was weary.
10 Thy congregation hath dwelt therein :
Thou, O God, hast prepared of Thy goodness
for the poor.
11 The Lord gave the word :

Great was the company of those that published it.

12 Kings of armies did flee apace :

And she that tarried at home divided the spoil.

13 Though ye have lien among the pots,

Yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove

covered with silver,

And her feathers with yellow gold.

14 When the Almighty scattered kings in it,

It was white as snow in Salmon.

(IV. *Messiah's ascension.*)

15 The hill of God is as the hill of Bashan ;

A high hill as the hill of Bashan :

16 Why leap ye, ye high hills !

This is the hill which God desireth to dwell in,

Yea, the Lord will dwell in it for ever.

17 The chariots of God are twenty thousand,

Even thousands of angels :

The Lord is among them,

As in Sinai, in the holy place.

18 Thou hast ascended on high,

Thou hast led captivity captive :

Thou hast received gifts for men ;

Yea, for the rebellious also,

That the Lord God might dwell among them.

19 Blessed be the Lord,

Who daily loadeth us with benefits,

Even the God of our salvation.

20 He that is our God is the God of salvation ;

And unto God the Lord belong the issues from
death.

(V. *His enemies punished.*)

21 But God shall wound the heart of His enemies,

And the hairy scalp of such a one
as goeth on still in his trespasses.

22 The Lord said,

I will bring again from Bashan,

I will bring my people again

from the depths of the sea :

23 That thy foot may be dipped

in the blood of thine enemies,

And the tongue of thy dogs in the same.

(VI. *Order of the Church in her services.*)

24 They have seen Thy goings, O God ;

Even the goings of my God, my King, in the
sanctuary.

25 The singers went before,

The players on instruments followed after ;

Among them were the damsels playing with tim-
brels.

26 Bless ye God in the congregations,

Even the Lord, from the fountain of Israel.

27 There is little Benjamin with their ruler,

The princes of Judah and their council,

The princes of Zebulun, and the princes of Naphtali.

28 Thy God hath commanded thy strength :

Strengthen, O God, that which Thou hast wrought
for us.

(VII. *Conversion of the nations.*)

29 Because of Thy temple at Jerusalem

Shall kings bring presents unto Thee.

30 Rebuke the company of spearmen,

The multitude of the bulls,

with the calves of the people,

Till every one submit himself with pieces of silver :
 Scatter Thou the people that delight in war.

- 31 Princes shall come out of Egypt :
 Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God.

(VIII. *Praise.*)

- 32 Sing unto God, ye kingdoms of the earth ;
 O sing praises unto the Lord ;
 33 To Him which rideth upon the heavens
 of heavens, which were of old ;
 Lo, He sendeth out His voice,
 and that a mighty voice.
 34 Ascribe ye strength unto God :
 His excellency is over Israel,
 And His strength is in the clouds.
 35 O God, Thou art terrible out of Thy holy places :
 The God of Israel is He
 That giveth strength and power unto His people.
 Blessed be God.

REFLECTIONS.

1, 2. Those who reject the divine mercy cannot escape the divine displeasure. Our blessed Lord is almighty to save ; and He is also almighty to destroy. But all those who submit to Him, have abundant reason to rejoice ; for He will be their Comforter and Deliverer.

3. The history of the Church affords us the fullest proof of God's power and lovingkindness. The deliverance from Egypt ; the giving of the law ; the ordinances of the Church ; and the victories and prosperity given to the Israelites ; were subjects that engaged the

attention of the pious Jews. We Christians look to a greater deliverance ; to a better covenant ; to spiritual victories and prosperity.

4. We look not to the mountains of the world, but to "the mountain of the Lord ;" to the Church of the living God. We contemplate, as its ever-living Head, our ascended Lord, who has "led captivity captive," and "received gifts for men." In Him we glory, as the God of our salvation, in whose hands are life and death.

5. Did God punish Pharaoh and the enemies of Israel? Let the enemies of Christ and of His Church consider their ways, before their impiety issues in their final destruction.

6. Joy, order, and unanimity prevailed in the Jewish Church ; and God was her strength and stability. Oh that these things abounded in the Christian Church! "Strengthen, O God, that which Thou hast wrought for us."

7. David looked to the prosperity and enlargement of his kingdom : and thus, too, we ought to pray for the prosperity and extension of the Messiah's kingdom. Hasten the time, O Lord, when all men of all nations shall lift up their hands and voices to Thee in adoration and praise !

8. The power and goodness of God in redemption should fill our hearts with gratitude and joy, and our lips with songs of praise. We contemplate His majesty and strength, His voice of thunder and His arm of

power; and we are filled with reverence and awe. We contemplate His love and mercy, His goodness to His people; and we are filled with delight and joy.

PRAYER.

O great and glorious God, may we always meditate with devout minds and grateful hearts on Thy wonderful dealings towards the children of men, especially in our redemption through Jesus Christ. Grant that we may so believe in our ascended Lord as to be made partakers of that salvation which is in Him. May joy and order and concord abound in Thy Church; and may all nations be brought into the true fold; to the glory of Thy Name; through the same Thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PSALM LXIX.

DAY 13.]

EVENING PRAYER.

Prayer, as Psalm xiii. David wrote this Psalm, probably, during the rebellion of Absalom. Viewed literally, it is the prayer of a dejected sufferer: but it must be regarded as having an especial reference to our blessed Lord.

(I. *Messiah's sufferings.*)

1 Save me, O God :

For the waters are come in unto my soul.

2 I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing :

I am come into deep waters,

where the floods overflow me.

3 I am weary of my crying : my throat is dried :

Mine eyes fail while I wait for my God.

4 They that hate me without a cause

- Are more than the hairs of my head :
They that would destroy me,
Being mine enemies wrongfully, are mighty :
Then I restored that which I took not away.
5 O God, Thou knowest my foolishness ;
And my sins are not hid from Thee.

(II. *His prayer for His people.*)

- 6 Let not them that wait on Thee,
O Lord God of hosts,
Be ashamed for my sake :
Let not those that seek Thee
Be confounded for my sake, O God of Israel.
7 Because for Thy sake I have borne reproach ;
Shame hath covered my face.

(III. *His treatment from the Jews.*)

- 8 I am become a stranger unto my brethren,
And an alien unto my mother's children.
9 For the zeal of Thy house
hath eaten me up ;
And the reproaches of them that reproached Thee
are fallen upon me.
10 When I wept, and chastened my soul with fasting,
That was to my reproach.
11 I made sackcloth also my garment ;
And I became a proverb to them :
12 They that sit in the gate speak against me ;
And I was the song of the drunkards.

(IV. *His prayer to His Father.*)

- 13 But as for me, my prayer is unto Thee,
O Lord, in an acceptable time :

O God, in the multitude of Thy mercy hear me,
In the truth of Thy salvation.

- 14 Deliver me out of the mire,
And let me not sink :
Let me be delivered from them that hate me,
And out of the deep waters.
- 15 Let not the waterflood overflow me,
Neither let the deep swallow me up,
And let not the pit shut her mouth upon me.
- 16 Hear me, O Lord ; for Thy lovingkindness is good :
Turn unto me according to the multitude
of Thy tender mercies.
- 17 And hide not Thy face from Thy servant ;
For I am in trouble : hear me speedily.
- 18 Draw nigh unto my soul, and redeem it :
Deliver me because of mine enemies.
- 19 Thou hast known my reproach,
and my shame, and my dishonour :
Mine adversaries are all before Thee.

(V. *His complaint : the crucifixion.*)

- 20 Reproach hath broken my heart ;
and I am full of heaviness :
And I looked for some to take pity,
but there was none ;
And for comforters, but I found none.
- 21 They gave me also gall for my meat ;
And in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.

(VI. *He foretells the ruin of the Jews.*)

- 22 Let their table become a snare before them :
And that which should have been for their welfare,
let it become a trap.

- 23 Let their eyes be darkened, that they see not;
And make their loins continually to shake.
- 24 Pour out Thine indignation upon them,
And let Thy wrathful anger take hold of them.
- 25 Let their habitation be desolate;
And let none dwell in their tents.
- 26 For they persecute him whom Thou hast smitten;
And they talk to the grief of those
whom Thou hast wounded.
- 27 Add iniquity unto their iniquity:
And let them not come unto Thy righteousness.
- 28 Let them be blotted out of the book of the living,
And not be written with the righteous.

(VII. *His prayer for Himself.*)

- 29 But I am poor and sorrowful:
Let Thy salvation, O God, set me up on high.

(VIII. *The Church praises God.*)

- 30 I will praise the name of God with a song,
And will magnify Him with thanksgiving.
- 31 This also shall please the Lord better than an ox
Or bullock that hath horns and hoofs.

(IX. *A gracious assurance.*)

- 32 The humble shall see this, and be glad;
And your heart shall live that seek God.
- 33 For the Lord heareth the poor,
And despiseth not His prisoners.

(X. *Praise.*)

- 34 Let the heaven and earth praise Him,
The seas, and every thing that moveth therein.

(XI. Prosperity of the Church foretold.)

- 35 For God will save Zion,
And will build the cities of Judah :
That they may dwell there, and have it in possession.
- 36 The seed also of His servants shall inherit it :
And they that love His Name shall dwell therein.

REFLECTIONS.

1. Bitter were the sufferings of our blessed Lord : severe also at times are the sufferings of His Church, and of each of its members. Our Redeemer prayed to His Father ; and thus He is an Example to His Church and to each of His true followers.

2. The Redeemer prayed for His Church ; that His people might “not be offended in Him.” The Christian will in like manner pray that, whatever be his distress or reproach, the pious may not be removed from their steadfastness by reason of any misconduct of his.

3. Such treatment our Lord met with, when He “came to His own, and His own received Him not.” We must not account it strange if the world hate us, mock us, and persecute us.

4. Did our blessed Saviour thus pray to His Father ? Truly He has here taught us how to pray ; what blessings to ask, and how to urge our requests. Happy are they who abound in such supplications at the throne of grace !

5. Here we see our Saviour in the last stage of His sufferings. And shall we not love Him who under-

went such sorrow and anguish in redeeming a lost world?

6. In these awful verses we see the punishment of the unbelieving Jews: and in their punishment we see the destruction that awaits the impenitent and unbelieving of every age and nation. "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?"

7. Did our blessed Lord thus feel and pray in the day of His humiliation? Thus too shall we feel and pray, if we belong to Him.

8—11. There was joy set before our blessed Redeemer; His sufferings were followed by exaltation and triumph. And thus the whole Church and every faithful member of it may praise the name of God; yea, all creation may join in the song of praise: for the Redeemer shall "see of the travail of His soul;" the Church shall prosper; and from generation to generation there shall be a people who shall therein magnify God their Saviour with thanksgiving.

PRAYER.

O blessed and glorious God, we praise and magnify Thee for Thy wonderful love in giving Thine only Son to undergo sufferings and death for our salvation. Grant that we may know Him, believe in Him, love Him; and follow Him; that, suffering with Him, we may be glorified together. May it please Thee thus to bless us and Thy whole Church, that we may praise and magnify Thee for ever, through Jesus Christ our Redeemer and Advocate. Amen.

PSALM LXX.

Prayer, as Psalm iv. See Psalm xl. 13—17. A Psalm of David.

(I. *Prayer.*)

- 1 Make haste, O God, to deliver me ;
Make haste to help me, O Lord.
- 2 Let them be ashamed and confounded
that seek after my soul :
Let them be turned backward, and put to confusion,
that desire my hurt.
- 3 Let them be turned backward for a reward
of their shame that say, Aha, aha.
- 4 Let all those that seek Thee rejoice
and be glad in Thee ;
And let such as love Thy salvation say continually,
“ Let God be magnified.”
- 5 But I am poor and needy ;
Make haste unto me, O God :
Thou art my Help and my Deliverer ;
O Lord, make no tarrying.

REFLECTIONS.

It is well for us to feel our weakness and poverty ; to see that our help is not in ourselves ; for then we shall look to God, and earnestly pray to Him for help and deliverance. In our prayers for ourselves we shall also pray for the prosperity and happiness of the godly, that they may be able to say, “ Let God be magnified.”

PRAYER.

O Lord our God, in all our troubles may we call

upon Thee in earnest prayer. Preserve and prosper, we beseech Thee, Thy faithful people: and may we be of the number of those who seek Thee, who love Thy salvation, and who always say, "The Lord be magnified" for all His goodness to us; through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

PSALM LXXI.

DAY 14.]

MORNING PRAYER.

Prayer, as Psalm iii. Probably written by David in old age: occasion not known.

(I. *Prayer.*)

- 1 In Thee, O Lord, do I put my trust:
Let me never be put to confusion.
- 2 Deliver me in Thy righteousness,
and cause me to escape:
Incline Thine ear unto me, and save me,
- 3 Be Thou my strong habitation,
Whereunto I may continually resort:
Thou hast given commandment to save me;
For Thou art my rock and my fortress.
- 4 Deliver me, O my God,
Out of the hand of the wicked,
Out of the hand of the unrighteous and cruel man,

(II. *Past mercies recollected.*)

- 5 For Thou art my hope, O Lord God:
Thou art my trust from my youth.
- 6 By Thee have I been holden up from the womb:
Thou art He that took me out of my mother's
bowels:

My praise shall be continually of Thee.

7 I am as a wonder unto many :

But Thou art my strong refuge.

8 Let my mouth be filled with Thy praise

And with Thy honour all the day.

(III. *Prayer : prediction.*)

9 Cast me not off in the time of old age ;

Forsake me not when my strength faileth.

10 For mine enemies speak against me ;

And they that lay wait for my soul

take counsel together,

11 Saying, God hath forsaken him :

Persecute and take him,

For there is none to deliver him.

12 O God, be not far from me :

O my God, make haste for my help.

13 Let them be confounded and consumed

That are adversaries to my soul ;

Let them be covered with reproach and dishonour

That seek my hurt.

(IV. *Faith and prayer.*)

14 But I will hope continually,

And will yet praise Thee more and more.

15 My mouth shall show forth Thy righteousness

And Thy salvation all the day ;

For I know not the numbers thereof.

16 I will go in the strength of the Lord God :

I will make mention of Thy righteousness,

Even of Thine only.

17 O God, Thou hast taught me from my youth :

And hitherto have I declared Thy wondrous works.

- 18 Now also when I am old and grey headed,
O God, forsake me not ;
Until I have showed Thy strength
unto this generation,
And Thy power to every one that is to come.

(V. Of the past and of the future.)

- 19 Thy righteousness also, O God, is very high,
Who hast done great things :
O God, who is like unto Thee ?
20 Thou, which hast showed me great and sore
troubles,
Shall quicken me again,
And shalt bring me up again
from the depths of the earth.
21 Thou shalt increase my greatness,
And comfort me on every side.
22 I will also praise Thee with the psaltery
Even Thy truth, O my God :
Unto Thee will I sing with the harp,
O Thou Holy One of Israel.
23 My lips shall greatly rejoice
when I sing unto Thee ;
And my soul, which Thou hast redeemed.
24 My tongue also shall talk of Thy righteousness
All the day long :
For they are confounded,
For they are brought unto shame,
That seek my hurt.

REFLECTIONS.

1. The devices of our enemies will be vain, if we make God our refuge ; if we trust in Him and call

upon Him. Whatever, then, be our danger and sorrow, we know where to look for comfort and safety.

2. The recollection of past mercies may well strengthen present confidence. When we look back upon our preservation, temporal and spiritual, through a series of years, what reason shall we find to praise God !

3. Life will be a warfare to the last. Our enemies are many, and our strength is weakness. But He who preserved us in youth, will preserve us in old age. The young and old must look to God in faith and prayer ; and then all will be well with them.

4. Here is a most beautiful delineation of faith and prayer : it deserves our closest study and constant remembrance. What gratitude for the past ; what joy for the present ; what confidence for the future !

5. In these verses we see how the principles and affections already described lead to the elevated strains of praise and joy. With what delight does the Psalmist speak of the goodness of God ! With what transport does he speak of his own happiness !

PRAYER.

O blessed and glorious God, in youth and age may we trust in Thee ; and be Thou mercifully our Preserver from all our enemies. May we remember the past with gratitude, dwell on the present with joy, and look to the future with confidence. May we go forward in Thy strength, and make mention of Thy righteousness, of Thine only. Leave us not, neither forsake us ; but be with us, and enable us to rejoice

in Thee, and to praise Thee for ever; through Jesus Christ, our Redeemer and Advocate. Amen.

PSALM LXXII.

Prophetical. Probably the last Psalm which David wrote. Literally viewed, it relates to Solomon; spiritually, to Messiah.

(I. *Messiah's righteous administration.*)

- 1 Give the king Thy judgments, O God,
And Thy righteousness unto the king's son.
- 2 He shall judge Thy people with righteousness,
And Thy poor with judgment.
- 3 The mountains shall bring peace to the people,
And the little hills, by righteousness.
- 4 He shall judge the poor of the people.
He shall save the children of the needy,
And shall break in pieces the oppressor.

(II. *Its perpetuity.*)

- 5 They shall fear Thee
As long as the sun and moon endure,
Throughout all generations.

(III. *Its blessings.*)

- 6 He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass:
As showers that water the earth.
- 7 In His days shall the righteous flourish;
And abundance of peace
So long as the moon endureth.

(IV. *Its extent.*)

- 8 He shall have dominion also from sea to sea,

And from the river unto the ends of the earth.

- 9 They that dwell in the wilderness
shall bow before Him ;

And His enemies shall lick the dust.

- 10 The kings of Tarshish and of the isles
shall bring presents :

The kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts.

- 11 Yea, all kings shall fall down before Him :
All nations shall serve Him.

(V. *The redemption wrought in it.*)

- 12 For He shall deliver the needy when He crieth ;
The poor also, and him that hath no helper.

- 13 He shall spare the poor and needy,
And shall save the souls of the needy.

- 14 He shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence :
And precious shall their blood be in His sight.

(VI. *Prayer and praise in it.*)

- 15 And He shall live,
And to Him shall be given the gold of Sheba :
Prayer also shall be made for Him continually ;
And daily shall He be praised.

(VII. *Its increase and fruitfulness.*)

- 16 There shall be a handful of corn in the earth
Upon the top of the mountains :
The fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon :
And they of the city shall flourish
Like grass of the earth

(VIII. *Its perpetuity and universality.*)

- 17 His name shall endure for ever :
His name shall be continued as long as the sun :

And men shall be blessed in Him :
All nations shall call Him blessed.

(IX. *Doxology.*)

- 18 Blessed be the Lord God,
The God of Israel,
Who only doeth wondrous things.
- 19 And blessed be His glorious Name for ever :
And let the whole earth be filled with His glory ;
Amen, and Amen.
- 20 The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended.

REFLECTIONS.

1. Here we see the nature of Christ's kingdom: it is a kingdom of righteousness and peace: and such it is both with regard to the temporal and spiritual life. Diffuse the Gospel, and oppression ceases, and the cause of the poor is maintained: and the righteousness and peace revealed in the Gospel are also the great blessings in which the true believer rejoices.

2—4. Other kingdoms rise, flourish, and decay: but the kingdom of Christ is everlasting: no power, no lapse of time, affects it. Its happy subjects are partakers of the best blessings, and particularly of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, by which they flourish in righteousness and peace. And further, this kingdom shall increase until it comprehend the whole world. Hasten, O Lord, the advent of that happy and glorious period !

5, 6. Verses 12, 13, and 14, are a repetition and enlargement of the fourth verse. Our Redeemer

lives: let us pray continually for the prosperity of His kingdom, and daily praise Him for all His goodness to us.

7, 8. The images of temporal prosperity may remind us of that which is spiritual, when Christians shall be numerous and flourishing in every district of every land. The seventeenth verse is a repetition and amplification of the fifth verse. As Christ shall endure for ever, so all those who are blessed in Him shall be blessed for ever.

PRAYER.

Great and glorious Lord God, the God of Israel, so enlighten our minds, that we may understand the wondrous things of Thy word; and so further in our hearts the good work of religion, that we may bless Thy glorious Name. Grant, we beseech Thee, that the kingdom of Christ may increase and flourish in the world, and that the whole earth may be filled with His glory. Amen, and Amen.

PSALM LXXIII.

DAY 14.]

EVENING PRAYER.

Instructive, as Psalm i. Author, Asaph: argument similar to that of Psalms xxxvii. xxxix. and xlix.

(I. *Perplexity at seeing the wicked prosper.*)

1 Truly God is good to Israel,

Even to such as are of a clean heart.

2 But as for me, my feet were almost gone;

My steps had well nigh slipped.

- 3 For I was envious at the foolish,
When I saw the prosperity of the wicked.

(II. *The wicked described.*)

- 4 For there are no bands in their death :
But their strength is firm.
5 They are not in trouble as other men ;
Neither are they plagued like other men.
6 Therefore pride compasseth them about as a chain ;
Violence covereth them as a garment.
7 Their eyes stand out with fatness ;
They have more than heart could wish.
8 They are corrupt, and speak wickedly
Concerning oppression ; they speak loftily.
9 They set their mouth against the heavens,
And their tongue walketh through the earth.
10 Therefore His people return hither :
And waters of a full cup are wrung out to them.
11 And they say, "How doth God know?
And is there knowledge in the Most High?"

(III. *Suggestions of nature.*)

- 12 Behold, these are the ungodly,
Who prosper in the world ;
They increase in riches.
13 Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain,
And washed my hands in innocency.
14 For all the day long have I been plagued,
And chastened every morning.

(IV. *These corrected by grace.*)

- 15 If I say, I will speak thus ;

Behold, I should offend against the generation
of Thy children.

(V. *This difficult subject cleared up.*)

- 16 When I thought to know this,
It was too painful for me ;
17 Until I went into the sanctuary of God ;
Then understood I their end.
18 Surely Thou didst set them in slippery places ;
Thou castedst them down unto destruction.
19 How are they brought into desolation,
as in a moment !
They are utterly consumed with terrors.
20 As a dream, when one awaketh ;
So, O Lord, when Thou awakest,
Thou shalt despise their image.

(VI. *Ignorance cause of distress.*)

- 21 Thus my heart was grieved,
And I was pricked in my reins.
22 So foolish was I, and ignorant :
I was as a beast before Thee.

(VII. *Confidence in the divine goodness.*)

- 23 Nevertheless, I am continually with Thee ;
Thou hast holden me by my right hand.
24 Thou shalt guide me with Thy counsel,
And afterward receive me to glory.
25 Whom have I in heaven but Thee ?
And there is none upon earth that I desire beside
Thee.
26 My flesh and my heart faileth :
But God is the strength of my heart,

And my portion for ever.

27 For, lo, they that are far from Thee shall perish;
Thou hast destroyed all them that go a whoring
from Thee.

28 But it is good for me to draw near to God:
I have put my trust in the Lord God,
That I may declare all Thy works.

REFLECTIONS.

This Psalm (as well as the 37th) is admirably calculated to compose our minds amidst the perplexing dispensations of Providence in the present world. We might wish to see goodness and prosperity, sin and adversity, invariably united: but this is very far from being the case. "My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord." There is upon earth much apparent inequality: and if our faith be weak, and our views superficial and partial, we are too apt to be offended; to repine and murmur. But examine revealed truth: study this Psalm: and learn how to think and feel. Who can envy the wicked; flourishing, but soon to fade; exalted, but soon to be degraded? They boast, and rule, and prevail: but consider their end; desolation and destruction. Thus, guided by the light of Scripture, we ought to banish our ignorance, and to see that we have no just reason either to envy the ungodly, whatever prosperity they may enjoy upon earth, or to be dispirited and dismayed at our own trials.

PRAYER.

O Lord our God, Thou art true and just in all Thy ways; give us grace to put our trust in Thee, and

suffer us not to repine or murmur because the wicked prosper and the righteous are tried and afflicted. Guide us, we beseech Thee, by Thy counsel; strengthen us by Thy grace; and grant that we may be here continually with Thee, and find it good to draw near to Thee. Thus may we live unto Thee; and when this mortal life shall end, receive us to glory, and be Thou our portion for ever; through the merits of Jesus Christ our Redeemer and Advocate. Amen.

PSALM LXXIV.

Prayer, as Psalm xlv. The writer of this Psalm, probably after the death of Gedaliah, laments the ruin of the temple and the misery of the Jews. Jer. xli.

(I. Expostulation and prayer of the Church.)

- 1 O God, why hast Thou cast us off for ever?
Why doth Thine anger smoke against
the sheep of Thy pasture?
- 2 Remember Thy congregation,
Which Thou hast purchased of old;
The rod of Thine inheritance,
Which Thou hast redeemed;
This mount Zion, wherein Thou hast dwelt.
- 3 Lift up Thy feet unto the perpetual desolations;
Even all that the enemy hath done wickedly
in thy sanctuary.

(II. Desolation of the sanctuary.)

- 4 Thine enemies roar in the midst of Thy congregations,
They set up their ensigns for signs.

- 5 A man was famous according as
He had lifted up axes upon the thick trees.
6 But now they break down the carved work thereof
At once with axes and hammers.
7 They have cast fire into Thy sanctuary,
They have defiled by casting down
the dwelling-place of Thy Name to the ground.
8 They have said in their hearts,
“Let us destroy them together :”
They have burned up all the synagogues
of God in the land.
9 We see not our signs :
There is no more any prophet :
Neither is there among us any that knoweth
how long.

(III. *Former wonders wrought for the Church.*)

- 10 O God, how long shall the adversary reproach ?
Shall the enemy blaspheme Thy Name for ever ?
11 Why withdrawest Thou Thy hand,
even Thy right hand ?
Pluck it out of Thy bosom.
12 For God is my King of old,
Working salvation in the midst of the earth.
13 Thou didst divide the sea by Thy strength :
Thou brakest the heads of the dragons in the
waters.
14 Thou brakest the heads of leviathan in pieces,
And gavest him to be meat to the people
Inhabiting the wilderness.
15 Thou didst cleave the fountain and the flood :
Thou driedst up mighty waters.

(IV. God's providence.)

- 16 The day is Thine, the night also is Thine :
Thou hast prepared the light and the sun.
17 Thou hast set all the borders of the earth :
Thou hast made summer and winter.

(V. Prayer.)

- 18 Remember this,
That the enemy hath reproached, O Lord,
And that the foolish people have blasphemed
Thy name.
19 O deliver not the soul of Thy turtle dove.
unto the multitude of the wicked :
Forget not the congregation of Thy poor for ever.
20 Have respect unto the covenant :
For the dark places of the earth are full
of the habitations of cruelty.
21 O let not the oppressed return ashamed ;
Let the poor and needy praise Thy Name.
22 Arise, O Lord, plead Thine own cause ;
Remember how the foolish man reproacheth
Thee daily.
23 Forget not the voice of Thine enemies ;
The tumult of those that rise up against Thee
increaseth continually.

REFLECTIONS.

1. Thus the afflicted Church expostulates and prays in her calamity : and thus each of her members, witnessing her troubles and distress, ought to look to her everliving Head, and to implore Him to be gracious to her.

2. The wicked plot against the Church in their pride

and rage; and for a season they may prevail, as the instruments by which God is pleased to execute His righteous judgments. Those days, indeed, are melancholy and awful, in which ungodly men triumph, and the Church is trampled under foot.

3. Here the Church may learn whence to derive comfort in affliction. A review of her former history will furnish her with arguments and expostulations. Let not faith fail. He who has done great things for her will not fail to repeat His wonders of power and mercy on her behalf.

4. We see the hand of God, the proofs of His power and goodness, of His all-guiding providence, in the succession of day and night, of summer and winter; and will not He sustain and defend His Church?

5. Prayer is the great resource, as of the Church, so of each Christian. He who prays with faith and fervour is safe in the midst of danger; is strong, notwithstanding his weakness. While we see the devices and works of the ungodly, instead of trembling in dismay, and instead of resorting to vain expedients, it becomes us to look to God, and to pray to Him for ourselves and the whole Church; for the subversion of evil and the prosperity of the truth.

PRAYER.

Look down in mercy, O Lord, on Thy Church in her afflictions, and deliver her from the machinations and malice of all her enemies, that she may rejoice in Thy salvation, and that her faithful children may bless and praise Thy great and glorious Name, through Jesus Christ our blessed and only Saviour. Amen.

PSALM LXXV.

DAY 15.]

MORNING PRAYER.

Instructive, as Psalm i. Written by Asaph : the occasion of it is not known.

(I. *Praise.*)

- 1 Unto Thee, O God,
Unto Thee do we give thanks;
For that Thy Name is near
Thy wondrous works declare.

(II. *A resolve.*)

- 2 When I shall receive the congregation
I will judge uprightly.
- 3 The earth and all the inhabitants thereof are
dissolved :
I bear up the pillars of it.

(III. *A rebuke.*)

- 4 I said unto the fools, Deal not foolishly :
And to the wicked, Lift not up the horn :
- 5 Lift not up your horn on high :
Speak not with a stiff neck.
- 6 For promotion cometh neither from the east,
Nor from the west, nor from the south.
- 7 But God is the Judge ;
He putteth down one, and setteth up another.
- 8 For in the hand of the Lord there is a cup,
And the wine is red ; it is full of mixture ;
And He poureth out of the same :
But the dregs thereof, all the wicked of the earth
shall wring them out, and drink them.

(IV. *Praise.*)

- 9 But I will declare for ever ;
I will sing praises to the God of Jacob.
10 All the horns of the wicked also will I cut off ;
But the horns of the righteous shall be exalted.

REFLECTIONS.

1. The works, the ways, and the word of God, prove that He is near us : and a recollection of His constant presence should urge us to the duty of thanksgiving and praise.

2. Authority should be used to promote justice ; and whatever confusion may be around us, we should consult the maintenance of truth and order.

3. The ungodly may be proud, and own no superior ; but God orders all things : He advances and He depresses men, when and as He pleases : and the workers of evil will find, if they proceed in their wickedness, that the dregs of the divine wrath are their portion.

4. It becomes the good to be steadfast in faith ; to declare God's righteous dealings, and to sing His praise ; assured that the power of wickedness shall be broken, and that His servants shall be exalted to honour and happiness.

PRAYER.

O blessed God, may we always remember Thy presence, and give Thee thanks and praise. Help us, in our several places, to act uprightly. Convince the ungodly of their folly, and give them true repentance :

and may we, and all Thy people, declare Thy glorious works, and praise Thee for ever ; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PSALM LXXVI.

Thanksgiving, as Psalm xli. That Asaph who lived in the time of David might have written this Psalm to celebrate some victory : but some refer it with much probability to the overthrow of Sennacherib: verses 5, 6.

(I. God's glory in the Church.)

- 1 In Judah is God known :
His Name is great in Israel.
- 2 In Salem also is His tabernacle,
And His dwelling-place in Zion.

(II. The Church's deliverance.)

- 3 There brake He the arrows of the bow,
The shield, and the sword, and the battle.
- 4 Thou art more glorious and excellent
than the mountains of prey.
- 5 The stout-hearted are spoiled,
They have slept their sleep ;
And none of the men of might
have found their hands.
- 6 At Thy rebuke, O God of Jacob,
Both the chariot and horse are cast into a dead
sleep.

(III. A reflection.)

- 7 Thou, even Thou, art to be feared :
And who may stand in Thy sight
when once Thou art angry ?

(IV. Effect of the deliverance.)

- 8 Thou didst cause judgment to be heard from
heaven ;
The earth feared, and was still,
9 When God arose to judgment,
To save all the meek of the earth.
10 Surely the wrath of man shall praise Thee :
The remainder of wrath shalt Thou restrain.

(V. Exhortation.)

- 11 Vow, and pay unto the Lord your God ;
Let all that be round about Him
Bring presents unto Him that ought to be feared.
12 He shall cut off the spirit of princes :
He is terrible to the kings of the earth.

REFLECTIONS.

1. God is known in every Christian land ; but the Church is in an especial manner His dwelling-place : it is there that He meets and blesses His people.

2. Temporal deliverances are from God, and He is to be thankfully acknowledged as their author : but we more especially look to spiritual deliverances. How vain and impious is all opposition to God ! The wisdom of the wise becomes foolishness ; and the power of the mighty is found to be utter weakness.

3. The dealings of God ought to fill us with awe and reverence : and as His love and favour are to be sought and delighted in, so is His displeasure to be dreaded.

4. As we read this Psalm we may think of the overthrow of Sennacherib's army: and in that we see how God maintains the cause of His people, turns the wrath of man to His own glory, and restrains the passions and purposes of the wicked as He pleases. And surely this is a truth full of consolation to the humble believer in this evil world.

5. Kings and princes have great power: but if they abuse it, He who is King of kings will show Himself to be terrible to them by the judgments which He will inflict upon them. He, indeed, is that God who "ought to be feared" by every one: and they who are wise will stand in awe of Him, pay their vows to Him, and offer unto Him holy and acceptable worship.

PRAYER.

Great and glorious God, Thou art terrible towards evil-doers, and gracious unto Thy people. We thank Thee that we live in a land where Thou art known, and belong to the Church, which is Thy dwelling-place. Mercifully protect, and bless, and prosper Thy Church: and may we be of the number of those who fear Thee, worship Thee, and honour Thee in this world, so that in the world to come we may receive the gift of eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PSALM LXXVII.

Prayer, as Psalm xiii. Written in a season of great distress.
Author and occasion unknown.

(I. Complaint.)

- 1 I cried unto God with my voice,
Even unto God with my voice :
And He gave ear unto me.
- 2 In the day of my trouble I sought the Lord :
My sore run in the night, and ceased not :
My soul refused to be comforted.
- 3 I remembered God, and was troubled :
I complained, and my spirit was overwhelmed.
- 4 Thou holdest mine eye waking ;
I am so troubled that I cannot speak.

(II. Victory of faith over distrust.)

- 5 I have considered the days of old,
The years of ancient times.
- 6 I call to remembrance my song in the night :
I commune with mine own heart :
And my spirit made diligent search.
- 7 Will the Lord cast off for ever ?
And will He be favourable no more ?
- 8 Is His mercy clean gone for ever ?
Doth His promise fail for evermore ?
- 9 Hath God forgotten to be gracious ?
Hath He in anger shut up His tender mercies ?
- 10 And I said, This is my infirmity :
But I will remember the years
of the right hand of the Most High.
- 11 I will remember the works of the Lord :

- Surely I will remember Thy wonders of old.
- 12 I will meditate also of all Thy work,
And talk of Thy doings.
- 13 Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary;
Who is so great a God as our God?
- 14 Thou art the God that doest wonders:
Thou hast declared Thy strength among the
people.
- 15 Thou hast with Thine arm redeemed Thy people,
The sons of Jacob and Joseph.
- 16 The waters saw Thee, O God,
The waters saw Thee; they were afraid:
The depths also were troubled.
- 17 The clouds poured out water;
The skies sent out a sound;
Thine arrows also went abroad.
- 18 The voice of Thy thunder was in the heaven:
The lightnings lightened the world:
The earth trembled and shook.
- 19 Thy way is in the sea,
And Thy path in the great waters,
And Thy footsteps are not known.
- 20 Thou leddest Thy people like a flock
By the hand of Moses and Aaron.

REFLECTIONS.

1. We may here observe three things: First, a case of great distress, which is most distinctly and emphatically described. Secondly, the remembrance of God, and earnest supplication to Him. Thirdly, the acceptance of the prayer; "He gave ear unto me." Our thoughts of God, as if He were against us, may at some

seasons trouble us: but still our prayer must be made to Him; nor will it be made in vain.

2. We have here a description at large of the conflict between faith and distrust. We have the language of distrust in ver. 7—9. And we see in ver. 5, 6, and in ver. 10—12, how faith meets the case; how it puts the soul on serious consideration, and especially leads it to the examination of God's wonderful and gracious dealings in times past. In the remainder of the Psalm, ver. 13—20, we have a beautiful specimen of the manner in which the believing soul contemplates the ways of God with His Church and people. The soul may be brought into great distress; into darkness and despondency; and we may reason against ourselves. But we should consider that "this is our infirmity." He who rightly reflects on the past will not be overwhelmed by the present. If faith be called into proper exercise, we shall soon rest in the delightful conclusion, that all the ways of God are in holiness. The Israelites were tried, but they were redeemed; and they were led through the wilderness to Canaan. They were as a flock, protected by an almighty arm; always under the care and guidance of the good Shepherd. And, in like manner, the whole Church, and each member of it, is protected, guided, and provided for, by the Shepherd of Israel: and it is in the sure persuasion of this fact, that every distressed soul ought to find the purest comfort, and, instead of yielding to despondency and infirmity, to wait patiently on God, and rejoice in the consolations of faith and hope.

PRAYER.

O blessed and gracious God, in all the sorrows and trials of this mortal life, grant that we may put our whole trust in Thee, and call upon Thee in earnest prayer. Suffer not our infirmity and despondency to prevail; but may we consider Thy works and ways in former times with a true faith, and thus obtain repose and comfort. May we always remember that, though we are in the wilderness, we are under the guidance and protection of Him who is the good Shepherd. Grant this, we beseech Thee, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

PSALM LXXVIII.

DAY 15.]

EVENING PRAYER.

Historical. It contains an account of God's dealings with His people from the Exodus to the days of David.

(I. *Exhortation to learn and teach God's will.*)

- 1 Give ear, O my people, to my law;
Incline your ears to the words of my mouth.
- 2 I will open my mouth in a parable;
I will utter dark sayings of old:
- 3 Which we have heard and known,
And our fathers have told us.
- 4 We will not hide them from their children,
Showing to the generation to come
The praises of the Lord, and His strength,
And His wonderful works that He hath done.
- 5 For He established a testimony in Jacob,

And appointed a law in Israel,
Which He commanded our fathers,
That they should make them known to their
children :

6 That the generation to come might know them,
Even the children which should be born ;
Who should arise and declare them
to their children :

7 That they might set their hope in God,
And not forget the works of God,
But keep His commandments :

8 And might not be as their fathers,
A stubborn and rebellious generation ;
A generation that set not their heart aright,
And whose spirit was not stedfast with God.

(II. *God's wrath against sinners.*)

9 The children of Ephraim, being armed,
and carrying bows,
Turned back in the day of battle.
10 They kept not the covenant of God,
And refused to walk in His law ;
11 And forgot His works,
And His wonders that He had showed them.

12 Marvellous things did He
in the sight of their fathers,
In the land of Egypt, in the field of Zoan.

13 He divided the sea,
and caused them to pass through ;
And He made the waters to stand as a heap.
14 In the day-time also He led them with a cloud,

- And all the night with a light of fire.
- 15 He clave the rocks in the wilderness,
And gave them drink as out of the great depths.
- 16 He brought streams also out of the rock,
And caused waters to run down like rivers.
- 17 And they sinned yet more against Him,
By provoking the Most High in the wilderness.
- 18 And they tempted God in their heart
By asking meat for their lust.
- 19 Yea, they spake against God ; they said,
Can God furnish a table in the wilderness ?
- 20 Behold, He smote the rock,
That the waters gushed out,
And the streams overflowed ;
Can He give bread also ?
Can He provide flesh for His people ?
- 21 Therefore the Lord heard this, and was wroth ;
So a fire was kindled against Jacob,
And anger also came up against Israel.
- 22 Because they believed not in God,
And trusted not in His salvation :
- 23 Though He had commanded the clouds from above,
And opened the doors of heaven,
24 And had rained down manna upon them to eat,
And had given them of the corn of heaven.
- 25 Man did eat angels' food :
He sent them meat to the full.
- 26 He caused an east wind to blow in the heaven :
And by His power He brought in the south wind.
- 27 He rained flesh also upon them as dust,
And feathered fowls like as the sand of the sea :
- 28 And He let it fall in the midst of their camp,

- Round about their habitations.
- 29 So they did eat, and were well filled :
For He gave them their own desire ;
- 30 They were not estranged from their lust.
But while their meat was yet in their mouths,
- 31 The wrath of God came upon them,
And slew the fattest of them,
And smote down the chosen men of Israel.
- 32 For all this they sinned still,
And believed not for His wondrous works.
- 33 Therefore their days did He consume in vanity,
And their years in troubles.
- 34 When He slew them, then they sought Him :
And they returned and inquired early after God.
- 35 And they remembered that God was their Rock,
And the high God their Redeemer.
- 36 Nevertheless they did flatter Him with their mouth,
And they lied unto Him with their tongues.
- 37 For their heart was not right with Him,
Neither were they stedfast in His covenant.
- 38 But He, being full of compassion,
Forgave their iniquity, and destroyed them not :
Yea, many a time turned He His anger away,
And did not stir up all His wrath.
- 39 For He remembered that they were but flesh ;
A wind that passeth away, and cometh not again.
- 40 How oft did they provoke Him in the wilderness,
And grieve Him in the desert !
- 41 Yea, they turned back and tempted God,
And limited the Holy One of Israel.

- 42 They remembered not His hand,
Nor the day when He delivered them
from the enemy.
- 43 How He had wrought His signs in Egypt,
And His wonders in the fields of Zoan :
- 44 And had turned their rivers into blood ;
And their floods, that they could not drink.
- 45 He sent divers sorts of flies among them,
which devoured them ;
And frogs, which destroyed them.
- 46 He gave also their increase unto the caterpillar,
And their labour unto the locust.
- 47 He destroyed their vines with hail,
And their sycamore trees with frost.
- 48 He gave up their cattle also to the hail,
And their flocks to hot thunderbolts.
- 49 He cast upon them the fierceness of His anger,
Wrath, and indignation, and trouble,
By sending evil angels among them.
- 50 He made a way to His anger ;
He spared not their soul from death,
But gave their life over to the pestilence ;
- 51 And smote all the first-born of Egypt ;
The chief of their strength in the tabernacles of
Ham :
- 52 But made His own people to go forth like sheep,
And guided them in the wilderness like a flock.
- 53 And He led them on safely, so that they feared
not ;
But the sea overwhelmed their enemies.
- 54 And He brought them to the border of His
sanctuary,

- Even to this mountain,
which His right hand had purchased.
- 55 And He cast out the heathen also before them,
And divided them an inheritance by line,
And made the tribes of Israel to dwell in their tents.
- 56 Yet they tempted and provoked the most high
God,
And kept not His testimonies :
- 57 But turned back,
and dealt unfaithfully like their fathers :
They were turned aside like a deceitful bow.
- 58 For they provoked Him to anger,
with their high places,
And moved Him to jealousy
with their graven images.
- 59 When God heard this, He was wroth,
And greatly abhorred Israel :
- 60 So that He forsook the tabernacle of Shiloh,
The tent which he placed among men ;
- 61 And delivered His strength into captivity,
And His glory into the enemy's hand.
- 62 He gave His people over also unto the sword ;
And was wroth with His inheritance.
- 63 The fire consumed their young men ;
And their maidens were not given to marriage.
- 64 Their priests fell by the sword ;
And their widows made no lamentation.
- (III. *God's choice of Judah, Zion, and David.*)
- 65 Then the Lord awaked, as one out of sleep,
And like a mighty man that shouteth
by reason of wine.

- 66 And He smote His enemies in the hinder parts :
He put them to a perpetual reproach.
- 67 Moreover He refused the tabernacle of Joseph,
And chose not the tribe of Ephraim :
- 68 But chose the tribe of Judah,
The mount Zion which He loved.
- 69 And He built His sanctuary like high palaces,
Like the earth which He hath established for ever.
- 70 He chose David also His servant,
And took him from the sheep-folds :
- 71 From following the ewes great with young,
He brought him to feed Jacob His people,
And Israel His inheritance.
- 72 So He fed them according to the integrity
of His heart,
And guided them by the skilfulness of His hands.

REFLECTIONS.

1. In the first eight verses we are taught, that it is our duty to attend to divine instruction ; to the revelation which God has given us ; that it is our duty to instruct our children in the word of God, and to make them acquainted with His works and ways ; and that the design of all religious instruction is, to cause men to remember God and His works, to trust in Him and obey Him, and not to follow the example of the obstinate and rebellious.

2, 3. In the remaining part of the Psalm we have a narrative which contains an account of the dealings of God with the Israelites, and of the conduct of the Israelites towards God, in Egypt, in the wilderness, and after their settlement in Canaan, to the days of David.

What do we see in the dealings of God? Acts of Providence the most wonderful and gracious; miracles of power and of goodness; various expressions of His displeasure; various proofs of His righteous and awful judgments; and then, we must add, as clear expressions, as signal proofs, of His forbearance, mercy, and compassion. Of all this the Psalm affords the most striking evidence. And what do we see in the conduct of the Israelites? Violation of the covenant, self-will, forgetfulness, and disobedience; discontent and mourning; idolatry and hypocrisy; these are some of their sins enumerated by the Psalmist. The last verses of the Psalm relate to the goodness of God in the appointment of David to be king; an event most prosperous, whether we think of the Church or of the commonwealth. While we reflect on the dealings of God, shall we not feel wonder, delight, gratitude, and awe? And while we consider the conduct of the Israelites, shall we not be filled with astonishment at the depravity and folly and wickedness of man? How clearly do we here see, that iniquity is the spring of all our woes, and that true piety is our happiness and glory! Many are our blessings: but what return do we make to God for them? When we are in danger, we tremble: when we think ourselves secure, we rebel. God raised up David for Israel: it becomes us to remember, that He has raised up for us a greater than David, under whose government we ought to live, as His obedient subjects.

PRAYER.

O Lord, stir us up to attend to divine instruction,

and enable us to bring up our children in the knowledge of Thy works and will. While we see Thy righteous and gracious ways with Thy people of old time, may we fear to offend Thee, and be careful to please Thee both in faith and practice, through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

PSALM LXXIX.

DAY 16.]

MORNING PRAYER.

Prayer, as Psalm xlv. The argument is the same as that of Psalm lxxiv.

(I. *Complaint.*)

- 1 O God, the heathen are come into Thine inheritance;
Thy holy temple have they defiled :
They have laid Jerusalem on heaps.
- 2 The dead bodies of Thy servants have they given
To be meat unto the fowls of the heaven,
The flesh of Thy saints
Unto the beasts of the earth.
- 3 Their blood have they shed like water
Round about Jerusalem ;
And there was none to bury them.
- 4 We are become a reproach to our neighbours,
A scorn and derision to them
that are round about us.

(II. *Prayer for Redress.*)

- 5 How long, O Lord ? wilt Thou be angry for ever ?
Shall Thy jealousy burn for ever ?

- 6 Pour out Thy wrath upon the heathen
That have not known Thee,
And upon the kingdoms
That have not called upon Thy Name.
7 For they have devoured Jacob,
And laid waste his dwelling-place.

(III. *Prayer for forgiveness.*)

- 8 O remember not against us former iniquities :
Let Thy tender mercies speedily prevent us :
For we are brought very low.
9 Help us, O God of our salvation,
for the glory of Thy Name :
And deliver us, and purge away our sins,
for Thy Name's sake.

(IV. *For removal of reproach and misery.*)

- 10 Wherefore should the heathen say,
Where is their God ?
Let Him be known among the heathen in our
sight
By the revenging of the blood of Thy servants
which is shed.
11 Let the sighing of the prisoner come before Thee ;
According to the greatness of Thy power
Preserve Thou those that are appointed to die ;
12 And render unto our neighbours
Sevenfold into their bosom their reproach,
Wherewith they have reproached Thee, O Lord.

(V. *Profession of gratitude.*)

- 13 So we Thy people and sheep of Thy pasture
Will give Thee thanks for ever :

We will show forth Thy praise
To all generations.

REFLECTIONS.

1. How painful to the Jews was the desolation of their temple, city, and country ! How often may the Church under persecution have uttered the same language ! How thankful ought we to be for exemption from similar trials !

2. God is He whom we are to acknowledge in our troubles : to Him we look to deliver us from our adversaries ; and to Him must our prayer be poured forth, that we may be restored to His favour.

3. Here is a beautiful specimen of prayer : we implore pardon, holiness, and deliverance : we look to God, the God of our salvation, for these blessings, not for any worthiness in us, but according to His tender mercies, and for the glory of His name.

4. We are to pray, that God would make Himself known as the preserver and comforter of His afflicted people, and as restraining or punishing the malice and cruelty of their enemies. If we wait upon Him in faith and prayer, we may be assured that He will regard the sigh of the distressed, and put their enemies to shame.

5. The mercy and power of God, shown in His gracious and righteous measures, in the preservation of His people and in the overthrow of the ungodly, are matters that demand unceasing gratitude and praise.

PRAYER. •

[Whatever, O Lord, be the trials of Thy Church,

may she look up to Thee in faith and prayer. Mercifully forgive us our sins; and by Thy power may we be evermore defended and delivered from all our enemies, to the glory of Thy Name, through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

PSALM LXXX.

Prayer, as Psalm xliv. Occasion unknown.

(I. *Prayer of the Church in distress.*)

- 1 Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel,
Thou that leadest Joseph like a flock;
Thou that dwellest between the cherubim,
shine forth.
- 2 Before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh
stir up Thy strength,
And come and save us.
- 3 Turn us again, O God,
and cause Thy face to shine;
And we shall be saved.

(II. *Her complaint.*)

- 4 O Lord God of hosts,
How long wilt Thou be angry
Against the prayer of Thy people?
- 5 Thou feedest them with the bread of tears;
And givest them tears to drink in great measure.
- 6 Thou makest us a strife unto our neighbours;
And our enemies laugh among themselves.
- 7 Turn us again, O God of hosts,
and cause Thy face to shine;
And we shall be saved.

(III. *Her past and present state.*)

- 8 Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt;
Thou hast cast out the heathen, and planted it.
- 9 Thou preparedst room before it,
And didst cause it to take deep root,
And it filled the land.
- 10 The hills were covered with the shadow of it,
And the boughs thereof were like the goodly
cedars :
- 11 She sent out her boughs unto the sea,
And her branches unto the river.
- 12 Why hast Thou then broken down her hedges,
So that all they which pass by the way do pluck
her ?
- 13 The boar out of the wood doth waste it,
And the wild beast of the field doth devour it.

(IV. *Her prayer for deliverance.*)

- 14 Return, we beseech Thee, O God of hosts :
Look down from heaven, and behold,
And visit this vine ;
- 15 And the vineyard which Thy right hand
hath planted,
And the branch that Thou madest
strong for Thyself.
- 16 It is burned with fire, it is cut down :
They perish at the rebuke of Thy countenance.
- 17 Let Thy hand be upon the man of Thy right
hand,
Upon the son of man
whom Thou madest strong for Thyself.
- 18 So will not we go back from Thee :

Quicken us, and we will call upon Thy Name.

19 Turn us again, O Lord God of hosts,
cause Thy face to shine ;
And we shall be saved.

REFLECTIONS.

1. The afflicted Church turns to her Shepherd, pleads His presence and goodness, and prays for salvation; prays to be made partaker of the divine favour. Thus let the afflicted Christian act.

2. Here is the complaint of the Jewish Church in trouble: the complaint, also, of the Christian Church and of every faithful member of it in this evil world. Affliction and derision may be our lot: but prayer is our relief.

3. The Church is a vine: such were the descendants of Abraham: such now are all Christians. She has had seasons of prosperity and adversity. We should bless God for planting this vine in our world: and if we see it assailed and torn by enemies, the remaining verses of the Psalm show us what our duty is.

PRAYER.

Look down in mercy, O Lord, from heaven, Thy dwelling-place, upon Thy Church in her afflictions, and upon each of her afflicted members, and visit them with Thy favour. Grant that our blessed Redeemer, "the Son of man whom Thou madest strong for Thyself," may prevail, by His truth and grace, over all the powers of sin and darkness, and that His kingdom of light and life, of holiness and righteousness, may

flourish in the world. Keep us stedfast in our most holy faith ; quicken our souls ; and enable us to call upon Thy Name with unfeigned devotion. Thus, O Lord, be Thou favourable to us, and to Thy whole Church ; and may we evermore rejoice in Thy salvation ; through Jesus Christ our Redeemer and Intercessor. Amen.

PSALM LXXXI.

Thanksgiving, as Psalm xlv. Occasion uncertain.

(I. *Exhortation to praise God.*)

- 1 Sing aloud unto God our strength :
Make a joyful noise unto the God of Jacob.
- 2 Take a psalm, and bring hither the timbrel,
The pleasant harp with the psaltery.
- 3 Blow up the trumpet in the new moon,
In the time appointed, on our solemn feast day.
- 4 For this was a statute for Israel,
And a law of the God of Jacob.
- 5 This He ordained in Joseph for a testimony,
When He went out through the land of Egypt :
Where I heard a language that I understood not.

(II. *God's mercies.*)

- 6 I removed his shoulder from the burden ;
His hands were delivered from the pots.
- 7 Thou calledst in trouble, and I delivered thee ;
I answered thee in the secret place of thunder :
I proved thee at the waters of Meribah,
- 8 Hear, O my people, and I will testify unto thee :

- O Israel, if thou wilt hearken unto me;
9 There shall be no strange God in thee;
Neither shalt thou worship any strange God.
10 I am the Lord thy God,
Which brought thee out of the land of Egypt:
Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it.

(III. *Man's sin and punishment.*)

- 11 But my people would not hearken to my voice,
And Israel would none of me.
12 So I gave them up to their own hearts' lust:
And they walked in their own counsels.

(IV. *The divine lovingkindness.*)

- 13 Oh that my people had hearkened unto me,
And Israel had walked in my ways!
14 I should soon have subdued their enemies,
And turned my hands against their adversaries.
15 The haters of the Lord should have
submitted themselves unto Him:
But their time should have endured for ever.
16 He would have fed them also with the finest
of the wheat:
And with honey out of the rock
should I have satisfied thee.

REFLECTIONS.

1. God is our strength, and Him we ought to praise at all times, and especially "in the time appointed, on our solemn feast days." Our worship and holy ordinances are of divine appointment; we therefore cannot neglect them without a gross violation of duty. Deliverance from Egypt was always a subject of grate-

ful remembrance to the Jew: but to us has been made known a redemption of which that event was only a type.

2. Here we see the gracious ways of God. He delivered His people; He heard and answered their prayers; He proved them; He reminded them of their duty to Him; and He gave them a most encouraging promise. Such were His ways to Israel; such are His ways to us.

3. Such was Israel's folly; and such was the punishment which they incurred by it. How many Christians act with like perverseness, and are given judicially to follow their own desires and counsels!

4. We find the same spirit in these verses as in our blessed Lord's lamentation over Jerusalem. St. Luke, xiii. 34, 35. They show us in a striking manner the lovingkindness of God. What does He require of us? To hear and obey His words. What does He promise? Victory over our enemies; gracious support; and perpetual prosperity. Here, then, we learn how to live: and here we have the most encouraging motives to faith and obedience.

PRAYER.

Grant, O Lord, that we may always acknowledge Thee to be the Lord our God. May we duly remember all Thy goodness, and especially our redemption by Thy blessed Son. Give us grace to hearken unto Thee, and to walk in Thy ways. Mercifully hear our prayers, and support us in trials, and subdue our enemies. Thus may we be strengthened in our

souls, and fed with the bread of life, and now and evermore praise Thee with thankful and joyful hearts; through Jesus Christ our only Saviour. Amen.

PSALM LXXXII.

DAY 16.]

EVENING PRAYER.

Instructive: Advice to Magistrates. Occasion unknown.

(I. *Exhortation to judges.*)

- 1 God standeth in the congregation of the mighty;
He judgeth among the gods.
- 2 How long will ye judge unjustly,
And accept the persons of the wicked?
- 3 Defend the poor and fatherless:
Do justice to the afflicted and needy.
- 4 Deliver the poor and needy:
Rid them out of the hand of the wicked.

(II. *Reproof.*)

- 5 They know not, neither will they understand;
They walk on in darkness:
All the foundations of the earth are out of course.

(III. *The fall of the corrupt.*)

- 6 I have said, Ye are gods;
And all of you are children of the Most High.
- 7 But ye shall die like men,
And fall like one of the princes.

(IV. *Prayer.*)

- 8 Arise, O God, judge the earth:
For Thou shalt inherit all nations.

REFLECTIONS.

Rulers are especially under the eye of God ; He observes all their proceedings. It is particularly required of them, that they do not pervert equity and respect persons, and that they carefully maintain the just cause of the helpless. When they do not act thus, it may be justly said that the foundations of society are shaken. It is our duty to revere our rulers : but they should remember that they are mortal men. Amidst all the disorder which is in the world, it is our duty to call upon God in prayer, beseeching Him to rule in all nations, and to establish truth and piety, justice and holiness, in the world.

PRAYER.

Grant, O Lord, that all rulers may be endued with Thy heavenly grace, that, fearing Thee and hating covetousness, they may execute justice and maintain truth : and may it please Thee to bless and keep them, and to prosper them in all their counsels and endeavours to promote Thy glory and the good of mankind ; for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

PSALM LXXXIII.

Prayer, as Psalm xliv. Some refer this Psalm to David ; others to the days of Jehoshaphat.

(I. *The Church complains of her enemies.*)

- 1 Keep not Thou silence, O God :
Hold not Thy peace, and be not still, O God.
- 2 For, lo, Thine enemies make a tumult :
And they that hate Thee have lifted up the head.

- 3 They have taken crafty counsel against Thy people,
And consulted against Thy hidden ones.
- 4 They have said,
Come, let us cut them off from being a nation;
That the name of Israel may be no more
in remembrance.
- 5 For they have consulted together with one consent;
They are confederate against Thee:
- 6 The tabernacles of Edom, and the Ishmaelites;
Of Moab, and the Hagarenes;
- 7 Gebal, and Ammon, and Amalek;
The Philistines with the inhabitants of Tyre;
- 8 Assur is also joined with them;
They have holpen the children of Lot.

(II. *She prays against her oppressors.*)

- 9 Do unto them as unto the Midianites;
As to Sisera, as to Jabin, at the brook of Kison:
- 10 Which perished at Endor:
They became as dung for the earth.
- 11 Make their nobles like Oreb, and like Zeeb:
Yea, all their princes as Zeba, and as Zalmunna:
- 12 Who said, Let us take to ourselves
The houses of God in possession.
- 13 O my God, make them like a wheel;
As the stubble before the wind.
- 14 As the fire burneth a wood,
And as a flame setteth the mountains on fire;
- 15 So persecute them with Thy tempest,
And make them afraid with Thy storm.
- 16 Fill their faces with shame;
That they may seek Thy Name, O Lord.

- 17 Let them be confounded and troubled for ever ;
Yea, let them be put to shame, and perish :
18 That men may know that Thou,
Whose Name alone is Jehovah,
Art the most high over all the earth.

REFLECTIONS.

1. Such as was the condition of Israel in the world ; such is that of the Church through all ages. She is often plotted against, and persecuted, by violent and confederated enemies, who have nothing in common but enmity to her. In this we see the impiety and pride, the injustice and folly of ungodly men. In this also the Church, and each of her members, may see the power, wisdom, and goodness of God, who defends the righteous, tries them, prepares them for the Church above, and will soon raise them from sorrow, conflict, and depression, to joy, peace, and exaltation.

2. As the foes of Israel were vanquished, so shall likewise the foes of the Church. In vain shall they combine and counsel together. When God has accomplished His purposes by them, He will annul their schemes, unnerve their strength, and cover them with confusion and trouble.

PRAYER.

Bless, O Lord, and defend Thy Church. Frustrate the designs and efforts of her enemies. In all her troubles may she look to Thee, and rejoice in Thy protection. Purify her more and more by all her afflictions, and make her a blessing to the whole world, for the glory of Thy Name, through Jesus Christ our only Saviour. Amen,

PSALM LXXXIV.

Prayer, as Psalm xlii. Perhaps written by David during the rebellion of Absalom.

(I. *Desire after the house and presence of God.*)

- 1 How amiable are Thy tabernacles,
O Lord of hosts !
- 2 My soul longeth,
Yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord :
My heart and my flesh crieth out for the living
God.
- 3 Yea, the sparrow hath found a house,
And the swallow a nest for herself,
where she may lay her young,
Even Thine altars,
O Lord of hosts, my King and my God.

(II. *Blessedness of His ministers and servants.*)

- 4 Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house :
They will be still praising Thee.
- 5 Blessed is the man whose strength is in Thee ;
In whose heart are the ways of them.
- 6 Who passing through the valley of Baca
make it a well ;
The rain also filleth the pools.
- 7 They go from strength to strength,
Every one of them in Zion appeareth before God.

(III. *Prayer for the participation of it.*)

- 8 O Lord God of hosts, hear my prayer :
Give ear, O God of Jacob.
- 9 Behold, O God, our shield,
And look upon the face of Thine anointed.

- 10 For a day in Thy courts is better than a thousand.
I had rather be a door-keeper in the house
of my God,
Than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.
- 11 For the Lord God is a sun and shield :
The Lord will give grace and glory :
No good thing will He withhold
from them that walk uprightly.
- 12 O Lord of hosts,
Blessed is the man that trusteth in Thee.

REFLECTIONS.

1. We ought highly to esteem and earnestly to desire the ordinances of the Church. In these we have a respite from worldly care and anxiety, and are fitted for this world, and for that which is to come.

2. True worshippers are blessed: they praise God; He is their strength; they meditate on their way heavenwards; they pass through this vale of tears, refreshed with the waters from the wells of salvation; and they increase in strength, and grow in grace, until they appear before God.

3. A true Christian rightly estimates this blessedness, and prays to be a partaker of it. Days devoted to holy ordinances are our best days; and the lowest place in God's Church is infinitely preferable to any thing that the world can confer upon us. God is our light and defence; the giver of grace here and of glory hereafter; the giver of every good thing really needful for us. We must therefore say with the Psalmist, "O Lord of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in Thee."

PRAYER.

Grant, O Lord, that we may always value, love, and desire the holy ordinances of religion, and worship Thee in Thy house of prayer. Be Thou our sun and shield; strengthen and refresh us here with Thy grace; confer upon us every needful blessing; and may we so trust in Thee and serve Thee in this life as finally to obtain everlasting glory, through the merits and for the sake of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

PSALM LXXXV.

Thanksgiving, as Psalm xli. Of the author and occasion of this Psalm nothing certain can be said.

(I. Redemption from captivity.)

- 1 Lord, Thou hast been favourable unto Thy land:
Thou hast brought back the captivity of Jacob.
- 2 Thou hast forgiven the iniquity of Thy people,
Thou hast covered all their sin;
- 3 Thou hast taken away all Thy wrath:
Thou hast turned Thyself from the fierceness
of Thine anger.

(II. Prayer for the divine mercy and favour.)

- 4 Turn us, O God of our salvation,
And cause Thine anger toward us to cease.
- 5 Wilt Thou be angry with us for ever?
Wilt Thou draw out Thine anger to all generations?
- 6 Wilt Thou not revive us again;
That Thy people may rejoice in Thee?

- 7 Show us Thy mercy, O Lord,
And grant us Thy salvation.

(III. *Salvation.*)

- 8 I will hear what God the Lord will speak :
For He will speak peace unto His people,
and to His saints :
But let them not turn again to folly.
9 Surely His salvation is near them that fear Him ;
That glory may dwell in our land.
10 Mercy and Truth are met together ;
Righteousness and Peace have kissed each other.
11 Truth also shall spring out of the earth ;
And Righteousness shall look down from heaven.

(IV. *God's goodness.*)

- 12 Yea, the Lord shall give that which is good,
And our land shall yield her increase ;
13 Righteousness shall go before Him ;
And shall set us in the way of His steps.

REFLECTIONS.

1. Here is gratitude. By our sins we incur the divine wrath, and bring misery upon ourselves. But on our repentance and faith our sins are forgiven, the divine displeasure ceases, and we can joyfully speak of redemption.

2. Here is devotion. When we are touched with a due sense of our sins, we humble ourselves before God ; we pray to Him for mercy and salvation ; we pray that we may be spiritually revived, and that we may rejoice in Him.

3. In the gospel we see the union of mercy and truth, of righteousness and peace: God is just and yet our Justifier. But if we receive this gracious record, we must keep far away from sin and folly, fear Him, and order our conversation aright. Happy are the individuals and the nations who attend to these things!

4. Temporal blessings are from God; and if we look to Him, He will give us all needful good, and especially He will give us grace by which we shall be enabled to walk in the way of righteousness.

PRAYER.

O God of our salvation, give us penitent and believing hearts, and mercifully pardon our sins, and visit us with Thy favour. Lead us by Thy Holy Spirit into the true knowledge of the Gospel of Thy Son; and grant that we may live as His true disciples, in holiness and obedience, to Thy honour and glory, through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

PSALM LXXXVI.

DAY 17.]

MORNING PRAYER.

Prayer, as Psalm iii. Written by David, probably, when persecuted by Saul.

(I. *Prayer.*)

- 1 Bow down Thine ear, O Lord; hear me:
For I am poor and needy.
- 2 Preserve my soul; for I am holy:
O Thou my God, save Thy servant
that trusteth in Thee.

- 3 Be merciful unto me, O Lord :
For I cry unto Thee daily.
4 Rejoice the soul of Thy servant :
For unto Thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul.

(II. *God's goodness and greatness.*)

- 5 For Thou, O Lord, art good, and ready to forgive ;
And plenteous in mercy to all them
that call upon Thee.
6 Give ear, O Lord, unto my prayer ;
And attend to the voice of my supplications.
7 In the day of my trouble I will call upon Thee ;
For Thou wilt answer me.
8 Among the gods there is none like unto Thee,
O Lord ;
Neither are there any works like Thy works.
9 All nations whom Thou hast made shall come
And worship before Thee, O Lord ;
And shall glorify Thy Name.
10 For Thou art great, and doest wondrous things :
Thou art God alone.

(III. *Prayer and praise.*)

- 11 Teach me Thy way, O Lord ;
I will walk in Thy truth :
Unite my heart to fear Thy name.
12 I will praise Thee, O Lord my God,
with all my heart :
And I will glorify Thy Name for evermore.
13 For great is Thy mercy toward me ;
And Thou hast delivered my soul
from the lowest hell.

(IV. *Complaint; faith; prayer.*)

- 14 O God, the proud are risen against me,
And the assemblies of violent men
have sought after my soul;
And have not set Thee before them.
- 15 But Thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion,
and gracious,
Long-suffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth.
- 16 O turn unto me, and have mercy upon me;
Give Thy strength unto Thy servant,
And save the son of thine hand-maid.
- 17 Show me a token for good;
That they which hate me may see it,
and be ashamed:
Because Thou, Lord, hast holpen me,
and comforted me:

REFLECTIONS.

1. See the humility of the Christian: he feels that he is poor and needy. See his gratitude: he knows that through grace he is holy, and that he trusts in God. See his devotion: he prays for preservation, mercy, and joy. Happy is he who is familiar with this pious frame and exercise of soul.

2. We may here learn how a true Christian thinks of God; of His goodness and mercy, of His greatness and power. As to himself, he is fully persuaded that his prayers shall be answered. As to others, he is persuaded that God shall be acknowledged by all nations.

3. See true piety: it is divine instruction producing obedience: and, further, it is an abiding prin-

ciple in the heart. And here we learn how to praise God ; with all the heart ; for what He is in Himself, and for what He is to us, and has done for us.

4. The Christian must expect trouble and annoyance from the vain and worldly : let this lead him to prayer for divine mercy and strength ; for that token and proof of the divine goodness which will comfort him and silence his enemies.

PRAYER.

O gracious God, in all circumstances, and especially in the day of trouble, may we humble ourselves before Thee, call upon Thee, and put our trust in Thee. So teach us, and unite our hearts to Thee, to the fear and love of Thy Name, that we may walk before Thee unto all well-pleasing, and glorify Thee for evermore, through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

PSALM LXXXVII.

Prophetical.

(I. *The stability and felicity of Zion.*)

- 1 His foundation is in the holy mountains.
- 2 The Lord loveth the gates of Zion
More than all the dwellings of Jacob.
- 3 Glorious things are spoken of Thee,
O city of God.

(II. *Accession of the Gentiles foretold.*)

- 4 I will make mention of Rahab and Babylon
To them that know me :

Behold Philistia, and Tyre, with Ethiopia ;
This man was born there.

5 And of Zion it shall be said,
This and that man was born in her :
And the Highest Himself shall establish her.

6 The Lord shall count,
when He writeth up the people,
That this man was born there.

(III. *Grace and salvation in the Church.*)

7 As well the singers as the players on instruments
(shall be there ;)
All my springs are in Thee.

REFLECTIONS.

1. The Church is the city of God ; a city which has foundations ; a city which God loves, and in which He especially resides. He is in the dwellings of all His people : but He is more particularly with them in His house of prayer.

2. Rahab and Babylon, and Philistia, Tyre, and Ethiopia, enemies and strangers, shall enrol themselves among the members of the Church. Our spiritual birth is in the Church ; and those who are her true children are the persons who will be honoured in the last day. *Rev. xxi. 27.*

3. Joy becomes the Church ; and she ought to proclaim it in songs of praise and gratitude. And what must be the burden of her grateful and triumphant acknowledgment ? “ All my springs are in Thee.” Thou, O glorious and gracious Saviour, in whom all

fulness dwells, art He in whom are all the springs of light and life, of salvation and blessedness.

PRAYER.

Enlighten our minds, O Lord, that we may understand the glory of Thy Church ; that we may love what Thou lovest ; and that we may regularly be found where Thou dost especially meet and bless Thy people. Grant that enemies and strangers may be brought into Thy fold. Grant that we may be found in the last day to be true members of Thy Church. And give us grace to rejoice in the Lord always, and thankfully and joyfully to acknowledge that all our springs are in Thee ; through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

PSALM LXXXVIII.

Prayer, as Psalm xiii. Of Heman, to whom this Psalm is ascribed, nothing is known. It is

(An earnest prayer in deep distress.)

- 1 O Lord God of my salvation,
I have cried day and night before Thee.
- 2 Let my prayer come before Thee :
Incline Thine ear unto my cry ;
- 3 For my soul is full of troubles ;
And my life draweth nigh unto the grave.
- 4 I am counted with them that go down into the pit :
I am as a man that hath no strength.
- 5 Free among the dead,
Like the slain that lie in the grave,
Whom Thou rememberest no more :

- And they are cut off from Thy hand.
- 6 Thou hast laid me in the lowest pit,
In darkness, in the deeps.
- 7 Thy wrath lieth hard upon me,
And Thou hast afflicted me with all Thy waves.
- 8 Thou hast put away mine acquaintance far from me;
Thou hast made me an abomination unto them:
I am shut up, and I cannot come forth.
- 9 Mine eye mourneth by reason of affliction:
Lord, I have called daily upon Thee,
I have stretched out my hands unto Thee.
- 10 Wilt Thou show wonders to the dead?
Shall the dead arise and praise Thee?
- 11 Shall Thy loving-kindness be declared in the grave?
Or Thy faithfulness in destruction?
- 12 Shall Thy wonders be known in the dark?
And Thy righteousness in the land of forgetfulness?
- 13 But unto Thee have I cried, O Lord;
And in the morning shall my prayer prevent Thee.
- 14 Lord, why castest Thou off my soul?
Why hidest Thou Thy face from me?
- 15 I am afflicted and ready to die from my youth up:
While I suffer Thy terrors I am distracted.
- 16 Thy fierce wrath goeth over me;
Thy terrors have cut me off.
- 17 They came round about me daily like water;
They compassed me about together.
- 18 Lover and friend hast Thou put far from me,
And mine acquaintance into darkness.

REFLECTIONS.

This Psalm describes a very painful state of mind.

from outward and inward troubles. But it is not darkness without light. It is the delineation of the workings of a pious mind. Here is communion with God in mourning, expostulation, and prayer. The Psalm would seem to have reference to our suffering Lord. He will best understand it who knows what deep repentance means ; and he especially who has walked long in darkness, and seen no light. There are such children of affliction : and such may here see, for their comfort, that their case is not solitary. Forsaken by friends, perplexed by enemies, and tried by having no sense of the divine favour, their case is painful. But still they may here learn what is the right course of proceeding ; to cleave to God, to pour out the heart in prayer to Him, and to wait upon Him in faith and patience. “Blessed are they that mourn ; for they shall be comforted :” and if their afflictions now abound, yet in due time, when God sees proper to turn their sorrow into gladness, their consolations shall abound also.

PRAYER.

O Lord our God, it is Thou who dealest out to us our sorrows and our joys, our afflictions and consolations : in the day of trial, darkness, and anguish, may we cleave to Thee, trust in Thee, and call upon Thee. O suffer not our faith and patience to fail. Support and strengthen us, we beseech Thee, and cause us, when Thou seest fit, to bless Thee for all our sufferings, and to rejoice in Thy salvation ; through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

PSALM LXXXIX.

DAY 17.] EVENING PRAYER.

Prayer, as Psalm xliv. This Psalm has been, by some, referred to David, and is to be illustrated by 2 Sam. vii. 12, &c. Spiritually viewed, it describes the perpetuity of Christ's kingdom.

(I. Promises to David respecting Christ.)

- 1 I will sing of the mercies of the Lord for ever:
With my voice will I make known Thy faithfulness
to all generations.
- 2 For I have said, Mercy shall be built up for ever:
Thy faithfulness shalt Thou establish in the very
heavens.
- 3 I have made a covenant with my chosen,
I have sworn unto David my servant,
- 4 Thy seed will I establish for ever,
And build up Thy throne to all generations.

(II. God's perfections.)

- 5 And the heavens shall praise thy wonders, O
Lord:
Thy faithfulness also in the congregation of the
saints.
- 6 For who in the heaven
can be compared unto the Lord?
Who among the sons of the mighty
can be likened unto the Lord?
- 7 God is greatly to be feared in the assembly
of the saints,
And to be had in reverence of all them that are
about Him.

8 O Lord God of hosts !

Who is a strong Lord like unto Thee ?

Or to Thy faithfulness round about Thee ?

9 Thou rulest the raging of the sea :

When the waves thereof arise, Thou stillest them.

10 Thou hast broken Rahab in pieces,

as one that is slain ;

Thou hast scattered Thine enemies

with Thy strong arm.

11 The heavens are Thine ; the earth also is Thine :

As for the world and the fulness thereof,

Thou hast founded them.

12 The north and the south Thou hast created them :

Tabor and Hermon shalt rejoice in Thy Name.

13 Thou hast a mighty arm ;

Strong is Thy hand, and high is Thy right hand.

14 Justice and judgment are the habitation of Thy throne ;

Mercy and Truth shall go before Thy face.

(III. *Happiness and safety of His people.*)

15 Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound :

They shall walk, O Lord, in the light of Thy countenance.

16 In Thy name shall they rejoice all the day :

And in Thy righteousness shall they be exalted.

17 For Thou art the glory of their strength :

And in Thy favour our horn shall be exalted.

18 For the Lord is our defence ;

And the Holy One of Israel is our King.

(IV. *Covenant with David as the representative of Christ.*)

19 Then Thou spakest in vision to Thy holy one,

- And saidst, I have laid help upon one that is mighty :
I have exalted one chosen out of the people.
- 20 I have found David my servant ;
With my holy oil have I anointed him :
- 21 With whom my hand shall be established ;
Mine arm also shall strengthen him :
- 22 The enemy shall not exact upon him ;
Nor the son of wickedness afflict him.
- 23 And I will beat down his foes before his face,
And plague them that hate him.
- 24 But my faithfulness and my mercy shall be with him :
- 25 I will set his hand also in the sea,
And his right hand in the rivers.
- 26 He shall cry unto me,
Thou art my Father,
My God, and the Rock of my salvation.
- 27 Also I will make him my first-born,
Higher than the kings of the earth.
- 28 My mercy will I keep for him for evermore,
And my covenant shall stand fast with him.
- 29 His seed also will I make to endure for ever,
And his throne as the days of heaven.
- 30 If his children forsake my law,
And walk not in my judgments ;
- 31 If they break my statutes,
And keep not my commandments ;
- 32 Then will I visit their transgression with the rod,
And their iniquity with stripes.
- 33 Nevertheless my lovingkindness will I not utterly
take from him,
Nor suffer my faithfulness to fail.
- 34 My covenant will I not break,

Nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips.

35 Once have I sworn by my holiness
That I will not lie unto David.

36 His seed shall endure for ever,
And his throne as the sun before me.

37 It shall be established for ever as the moon,
And as a faithful witness in heaven.

(V. *The Church's lamentation.*)

38 But Thou hast cast off and abhorred,
Thou hast been wroth with Thine anointed.

39 Thou hast made void the covenant of Thy servant :
Thou hast profaned his crown by casting it to the
ground.

40 Thou hast broken down all his hedges ;
Thou hast brought his strongholds to ruin.

41 All that pass by the way spoil him ;
He is a reproach to his neighbours.

42 Thou hast set up the right hand of his adversaries ;
Thou hast made all his enemies to rejoice.

43 Thou hast also turned the edge of his sword,
And hast not made him to stand in the battle.

44 Thou hast made his glory to cease,
And cast his throne down to the ground.

45 The days of his youth hast Thou shortened ;
Thou hast covered him with shame.

(VI. *Her prayer.*)

46 How long, Lord? wilt Thou hide Thyself for ever?
Shall Thy wrath burn like fire?

47 Remember how short my time is ;
Wherefore hast Thou made all men in vain?

48 What man is he that liveth, and shall not see death?

- Shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the grave?
- 49 Lord, where are Thy former lovingkindnesses,
Which Thou swarest unto David in Thy truth?
- 50 Remember, Lord, the reproach of Thy servants;
How I do bear in my bosom the reproach
of all the mighty people;
- 51 Wherewith Thine enemies have reproached,
O Lord;
Wherewith they have reproached the footsteps of
Thine anointed.
- 52 Blessed be the Lord for evermore.
Amen, and Amen.

REFLECTIONS.

1. The mercy and faithfulness of God are subjects for our delightful meditation at all times. We know of a covenant that is ordered in all things and sure. The throne of Messiah is established, and it shall exist through all ages: and if we be His faithful subjects, we may well sing of the tender mercies of the God of our salvation.

2. Our notions of God should be lofty and sublime; we are here taught how to think of Him. All creation, all His dealings, show his power and majesty: His justice and judgment, His mercy and truth, are unquestionable. Surely, then, He is to be greatly feared, and to be had in reverence by all His people.

3. It is our privilege to hear the joyful sound of the Gospel. Happy are we if we know it and receive it: for then we enjoy the divine favour; and "joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ:" we have righteous-

ness and strength: we are protected here, and shall hereafter be exalted to glory.

4. David was a type of Christ. Here, then, we behold our blessed Lord and the New Covenant. He is exalted to universal dominion; and He has a people, in all nations, and through all ages, who acknowledge Him. The Covenant is unchanging and everlasting: but if we would receive its blessings, we must not only embrace it, but be true to it.

5. Israel suffered much: and thus the Church, in this world, experiences many trials; is often in a state of depression; and passes through much tribulation. Her enemies seem for a time to prevail and prosper. They rejoice, and she is in affliction.

6. Prayer to God is the refuge of the Church, and of every faithful member of it, in the time of trouble. We must humbly confess our sins; deprecate the divine wrath; plead the unchanging Covenant; and implore the blessing of the divine lovingkindness: and then we shall soon have occasion to say, "Blessed be the Lord for evermore."

PRAYER.

O gracious and merciful God, we thank Thee that we hear the joyful sound of the Gospel: grant that we may know it, and rejoice in Thy salvation. Look down in tender pity, we beseech Thee, on Thy Church in her afflictions; suffer not her enemies to prevail; but cause Thy power and majesty, Thy mercy and faithfulness, to be known in all nations, that we, and

Thy whole Church, may bless and praise Thee for evermore, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PSALM XC.

DAY 18.] MORNING PRAYER.

Instructive, as Psalm xxxix. "A Prayer of Moses, the man of God."

(I. God everlasting.)

- 1 Lord, Thou hast been our dwelling-place
In all generations.
- 2 Before the mountains were brought forth,
Or ever Thou hadst formed the earth and the
world,
Even from everlasting to everlasting, Thou art
God.

(II. Frail and mortal state of Man.)

- 3 Thou turnest man to destruction;
And sayest, Return, ye children of men.
- 4 For a thousand years in Thy sight
Are but as yesterday when it is past,
And as a watch in the night.
- 5 Thou carriest them away as with a flood;
they are as a sleep:
In the morning they are like grass which
groweth up.
- 6 In the morning it flourisheth, and groweth up;
In the evening it is cut down, and withereth.
- 7 For we are consumed by Thy anger,
And by Thy wrath are we troubled.

- 8 Thou hast set our iniquities before Thee,
Our secret sins in the light of Thy countenance.
- 9 For all our days are passed away in Thy wrath :
We spend our years as a tale that is told.
- 10 The days of our years are threescore years and ten ;
And if by reason of strength they be fourscore
years,
Yet is their strength labour and sorrow ;
For it is soon cut off, and we fly away.
- 11 Who knoweth the power of Thine anger ?
Even according to Thy fear, so is Thy wrath.
- 12 So teach us to number our days,
That we may apply our hearts unto wisdom. !

(III. *Prayer for the mercies of redemption.*)

- 13 Return, O Lord, how long ?
And let it repent Thee concerning Thy servants.
- 14 O satisfy us early with Thy mercy ;
That we may rejoice and be glad all our days.
- 15 Make us glad according to
the days wherein Thou hast afflicted us,
And the years wherein we have seen evil.
- 16 Let Thy work appear unto Thy servants,
And Thy glory unto their children.
- 17 And let the beauty of the Lord our God be
upon us ;
And establish Thou the work of our hands upon us ;
Yea, the work of our hands establish Thou it.

REFLECTIONS.

1. The eternal God is our Refuge. Such He has been in all ages to His people, and such He will be to

them for ever. How great is their bliss who can say, The eternal God is our refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms ! *Deut.* xxxiii. 27.

2. What an affecting view of man ! We rise and flourish ; we fade and fall. If we attain to what is accounted a long life, with what weakness and sorrow are we made familiar ! In this we have the fruit and proof of our sinfulness. It is wise in us duly to consider the displeasure of God against sin, and the brevity of life, so as to apply our hearts to true religion. Without such consideration, we spend our days in vanity.

3. Sound reflection will lead us to earnest prayer. And what do we stand in need of ? The divine favour and mercy ; so that our purposes and labours, in the way of duty, and for the glory of God, may be successful ; and that thus we may rejoice here, and rejoice for ever when the afflictions of this life come to an end.

PRAYER.

O everlasting God, look in mercy upon us, Thy frail and feeble creatures. Help us to consider our sinfulness, that we may humble ourselves before Thee. Help us to consider the shortness of life, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom. Enable us to employ our few and uncertain days in endeavouring to do Thy will ; and do Thou prosper our counsels and our labours. Make us such in faith and practice, that we may rejoice in Thy salvation, both now and for ever, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour. Amen.

PSALM XCI.

Instructive, as Psalm i.

(I. *Security of the righteous.*)

- 1 He that dwelleth in the secret place
of the Most High
Shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.
- 2 I will say of the Lord,
He is my Refuge and my Fortress :
My God ; in Him will I trust.
- 3 Surely He shall deliver thee from the snare
of the fowler,
And from the noisome pestilence.
- 4 He shall cover thee with His feathers,
And under His wings shalt thou trust :
His truth shall be thy shield and buckler.
- 5 Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night ;
Nor for the arrow that flieth by day ;
- 6 Nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness ;
Nor for the destruction that wasteth at noon day.
- 7 A thousand shall fall at thy side,
And ten thousand at thy right hand ;
But it shall not come nigh thee.
- 8 Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold
And see the reward of the wicked.
- 9 Because thou hast made the Lord,
which is my refuge,
Even the Most High, thy habitation ;
- 10 There shall no evil befall thee,
Neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.

(II. Angels guard them.)

- 11 For He shall give His angels charge over thee,
To keep thee in all thy ways.
12 They shall bear thee up in their hands, .
Lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.

(III. Their final victory.)

- 13 Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder :
The young lion and the dragon
shalt thou trample under feet.

(IV. Deliverance and exaltation.)

- 14 Because he hath set his love upon me,
Therefore will I deliver him :
I will set him on high,
Because he hath known my name.
15 He shall call upon me, and I shall answer him :
I will be with him in trouble ;
I will deliver him, and honour him.
16 With long life will I satisfy him,
And show him my salvation.

REFLECTIONS.

1. In what a noble and elevated strain does the Psalmist here set forth the security of the righteous ! This world abounds with danger, both as to body and soul. By day and by night we are exposed to various enemies. To whom, in these circumstances, shall we look for safety ? If we put our trust in God, He will be our deliverer and preserver.

2, 3. Angels, "ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation," befriend the righteous. Enemies, raging as the lion,

or venomous as the serpent, shall be overcome by those who make God their refuge.

4. Such is the gracious promise of God to His people. They love Him; they know and acknowledge Him; they call upon Him; and He delivers them from enemies and dangers; exalts them; answers their prayers; is with them in their troubles; puts peculiar honour upon them; and shows them His salvation.

PRAYER.

Grant us grace, O Lord, that we may know and love Thee; that we may trust in Thee, and call upon Thee; so that we may be safe under Thy protection, and rejoice in Thy salvation. Preserve us, we beseech Thee, both in body and soul; and be Thou continually with us, in all our dangers and troubles; that we may glorify Thy Name, and praise Thee for all Thy goodness to us; through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

PSALM XCII.

Instructive, as Psalm i. "A Psalm or Song for the Sabbath Day."

(I. *Exhortation to praise God.*)

- 1 It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord,
And to sing praises unto Thy Name, O Most High:
- 2 To show forth Thy lovingkindness in the morning,
And Thy faithfulness every night,
- 3 Upon an instrument of ten strings,
and upon the psaltery;
Upon the harp with a solemn sound.

(II. His works and counsels.)

- 4 For Thou, Lord, hast made me glad through
Thy work :
I will triumph in the works of Thy hands.
5 O Lord, how great are Thy works !
And Thy thoughts are very deep.

(III. Man inconsiderate.)

- 4 A brutish man knoweth not ;
Neither doth a fool understand this.

(IV. Destruction of the wicked.)

- 7 When the wicked spring as the grass,
And when all the workers of iniquity do flourish ;
It is that they shall be destroyed for ever ;
8 But Thou, O Lord, art most high for evermore.
9 For, lo, Thine enemies, O Lord,
For, lo, Thine enemies shall perish ;
All the workers of iniquity shall be scattered.

(V. Exaltation of the godly.)

- 10 But my horn shalt Thou exalt
like the horn of a unicorn :
I shall be anointed with fresh oil.
11 Mine eye also shall see my desire on mine enemies,
And mine ears shall hear my desire of the wicked
that rise up against me.
12 The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree ;
He shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon.
13 Those that be planted in the house of the Lord
Shall flourish in the courts of our God.
14 They shall still bring forth fruit in old age ;
They shall be fat and flourishing.

(IV. *God's righteousness.*)

- 15 To show that the Lord is upright,
He is my Rock,
And there is no unrighteousness in Him.

REFLECTIONS.

1. The lovingkindness and faithfulness of God are subjects that demand our unceasing gratitude and praise; and it is a good thing, whether we regard others or ourselves, to abound in thanksgiving.

2, 3. The works, the ways, and the counsels of God demand our constant and close consideration; for thus we enlarge our knowledge, strengthen our faith, and enliven our joyful feelings. Well may he who does not thus employ his thoughts be accounted a "brutish man." Alas! how many Christians lead a mere animal life through the neglect of serious reflection and meditation!

4, 5. We have here a striking contrast. The ungodly are described as enemies of God and workers of iniquity; as springing up and flourishing like grass, feeble and transient; and as perishing and destroyed for ever. On the contrary, the godly are represented by the stately palm tree and the goodly cedar: they are worshippers of God, endowed with strength, and inspired with goodness: and they flourish and produce the fruit of good works even to old age.

6. A due examination of this subject will convince us of the righteousness of God. His ways are equal. The evil-doers are punished, and there is a reward for the righteous.

PRAYER.

Help us, O Lord, to meditate with understanding minds on Thy works and ways and counsels; and the more we discover of Thy wisdom and power, of Thy lovingkindness, faithfulness, and righteousness, the more may we abound in gratitude and praise, to Thy glory, through Jesus Christ our only Saviour. Amen.

PSALM XCIII.

DAY 18.]

EVENING PRAYER.

Displaying the divine perfections, as Psalm viii. Psalms xciii—c. are viewed as prophetic of Messiah's kingdom.

(I. *The divine government.*)

- 1 The Lord reigneth,
He is clothed with majesty:
The Lord is clothed with strength,
Wherewith He hath girded Himself:
The world also is established,
That it cannot be moved.
- 2 Thy throne is established of old:
Thou art from everlasting.
- 3 The floods have lifted up, O Lord,
The floods have lifted up their voice;
The floods lift up their waves.
- 4 The Lord on high is mightier
Than the noise of many waters,
Yea, than the mighty waves of the sea.
- 5 Thy testimonies are very sure;
Holiness becometh Thy house,
O Lord, for ever.

REFLECTIONS.

This is our consolation in all circumstances—Jehovah reigneth, He is glorious and almighty ; the Creator and Upholder of all things ; the everlasting God. The floods of the sea, and the floods of human passion, may swell and rage ; but He stills both by His word. For our instruction, guidance, and comfort here, we have His testimonies, the revelation of His will ; and in this we have what is true, faithful, and unchanging. Oh be it our study to receive the word of truth and life, and to worship Him and walk before Him in holiness.

PRAYER.

O Almighty God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, may we stand in awe of Thy majesty, acknowledge Thy government over all things, trust in Thy mercy and goodness, and worship Thee in the beauty of holiness ; to Thy honour and glory, and to our own salvation. Grant this for Thine own Name's sake. Amen.

PSALM XCIV.

Prayer, as Psalm xliv. This Psalm has been supposed to have been written by David in the rebellion of Absalom. Compare Psalms xiv. lviii.

(I. *Prayer for the fall of wickedness.*)

- 1 O Lord God, to whom vengeance belongeth ;
O God, to whom vengeance belongeth,
show Thyself.
- 2 Lift up Thyself, Thou Judge of the earth :
Render a reward to the proud.

- 3 Lord, how long shall the wicked,
How long shall the wicked triumph?
4 How long shall they utter and speak hard things?
And all the workers of iniquity boast themselves?

(II. *Cruelty and impiety of the wicked.*)

- 5 They break in pieces Thy people, O Lord,
And afflict Thine heritage.
6 They slay the widow and the stranger,
And murder the fatherless.
7 Yet they say, The Lord shall not see,
Neither shall the God of Jacob regard it.

(III. *God's omniscience.*)

- 8 Understand, ye brutish among the people;
And ye fools, when will ye be wise?
9 He that planted the ear, shall He not hear?
He that formed the eye, shall He not see?
10 He that chastiseth the heathen,
shall not He correct?
He that teacheth man knowledge
shall not He know?
11 The Lord knoweth the thoughts of man,
That they are vanity.

(IV. *Blessedness of the afflicted.*)

- 12 Blessed is the man whom Thou chastenest, O Lord,
And teachest him out of Thy law;
13 That Thou mayest give him rest
from the days of adversity,
Until the pit be digged for the wicked.
14 For the Lord will not cast off His people,
Neither will He forsake His inheritance.

- 15 But judgment shall return unto righteousness :
And all the upright in heart shall follow it.

(V. *God is the refuge of His people.*)

- 16 Who will rise up for me against the evil doers ?
Or who will stand up for me
against the workers of iniquity ?
17 Unless the Lord had been my help,
My soul had almost dwelt in silence.
18 When I said, My foot slippeth ;
Thy mercy, O Lord, held me up.
19 In the multitude of my thoughts within me
Thy comforts delight my soul.
20 Shall the throne of iniquity
have fellowship with Thee,
Which frameth mischief by a law ?
21 They gather themselves together
against the soul of the righteous,
And condemn the innocent blood.
22 But the Lord is my defence :
And my God is the rock of my refuge.
23 And He shall bring upon them their own iniquity,
And shall cut them off in their own wickedness ;
Yea, the Lord our God shall cut them off.

REFLECTIONS.

1, 2. We live in an evil world ; in a world of trial and sorrow. In verses 5—7 we see the cruelty and impiety of ungodly men. And in verses 1—4 we see how the righteous present their prayer to God, and plead with Him. In all our troubles here, we should follow their example ; not avenge ourselves, but com-

mit our cause to Him to whom vengeance belongeth. Rom. xii. 19.

3. Our bodily senses may shadow out to us the divine perfections. To God all things are known: to Him all hearts are open. The ungodly will do well to consider this, and to remember, that, sooner or later, they will receive at the hands of God according to their doings. Only timely repentance can prevent final ruin.

4. These verses are full of consolation to the righteous. They are chastened, but they shall not be forsaken: they shall be instructed in God's word, shall be upheld in the way of righteousness, and shall obtain rest—rest in God here, and with God hereafter. Thus blessed are all those who know God in the Gospel of His Son.

5. Here we see how the true believer encourages himself in God. He may be reduced to a painful state of mind; but still the comforts of God will sustain and delight his soul. He may be surrounded with ungodly men, who meditate mischief; but God will be his defence and refuge. Thus his faith supports him amidst all dangers and difficulties.

PRAYER.

Grant, O merciful God, that in all our sorrows and troubles in this world we may put our confidence in Thee. Whatever be the malice and cruelty of ungodly men, help us to commit ourselves and our cause to Thee. Sanctify to us, we beseech Thee, all trials and chastisements. Uphold us in the way of righte-

ousness ; comfort us and strengthen us in our souls ;
and give us rest in Thee both now and for ever,
through Jesus Christ Thy Son our Lord. Amen.

PSALM XCV.

DAY 19.]

MORNING PRAYER.

Psalm displaying the divine perfections, as Psalm viii. Written by David, perhaps, on the removal of the Ark to mount Zion. See Heb. iv. 7.

(I. *God is to be praised for His greatness and goodness.*)

1 O come, let us sing unto the Lord ;

Let us make a joyful noise to the Rock
of our salvation.

2 Let us come before His presence with thanks-
giving,

And make a joyful noise unto Him with psalms.

3 For the Lord is a great God,

And a great King above all gods.

4 In His hand are all the deep places of the earth :

The strength of the hills is His also.

5 The sea is His, and He made it :

And His hands formed the dry land.

6 O come, let us worship and bow down ;

Let us kneel before the Lord our Maker.

7 For He is our God :

And we are the people of His pasture,

And the sheep of His hand.

(II. *Caution against impenitence and unbelief.*)

To-day if ye will hear His voice,

- 8 Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation,
And as in the day of temptation in the wilderness:
9 When your fathers tempted me, proved me,
And saw my work.
10 Forty years long was I grieved with this generation,
And said, It is a people that do err in their hearts,
And they have not known my ways:
11 Unto whom I swear in my wrath
That they should not enter into my rest.

REFLECTIONS.

1. It highly becomes us to praise God with songs of joy and thanksgiving. It highly becomes us to worship Him; to bow down and kneel before Him. And why? Because He is the Rock of our salvation: He is the Creator of all things; He is our Maker and our God; and we are His sheep, His people, over whom He watches with a gracious eye, and for whom He provides with a bountiful hand.

2. We need the words of caution; and these verses furnish them. We look upon the Israelites in the wilderness: we think of their transgressions, and of the punishments inflicted upon them. "Now all these things happened unto them for examples; and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."

PRAYER.

O glorious and gracious God, give us, we beseech Thee, an effectual knowledge of Thyself as our Creator and Redeemer, that we may worship Thee, and praise

Thy holy Name. May we, as the people of Thy pasture and the sheep of Thy hand, labour to enter into the promised rest, and carefully guard against impenitence and unbelief. Grant this for Thy mercies' sake, through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

PSALM XCVI.

Displaying the divine perfections, as Psalm viii. Written by David. See 1 Chron. xvi. 23, &c.

(I. Exhortation to praise.)

- 1 O sing unto the Lord a new song :
Sing unto the Lord, all the earth.
- 2 Sing unto the Lord, bless His Name ;
Show forth His salvation from day to day.
- 3 Declare His glory among the heathen,
His wonders among the people.

(II. God's greatness.)

- 4 For the Lord is great, and greatly to be praised :
He is to be feared above all gods.
- 5 For all the gods of the nations are idols :
But the Lord made the heavens.
- 6 Honour and majesty are before Him ;
Strength and beauty are in His sanctuary.
- 7 Give unto the Lord, O ye kindreds of the people,
Give unto the Lord glory and strength.
- 8 Give unto the Lord the glory due unto His Name :
Bring an offering, and come into His courts.
- 9 O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness :
Fear before Him, all the earth.

(III. *His sovereignty and justice.*)

- 10 Say among the heathen, that the Lord reigneth :
The world also shall be established
that it shall not be moved :
He shall judge the people righteously.
- 11 Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad ;
Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof.
- 12 Let the field be joyful, and all that is therein :
Then shall all the trees of the woods rejoice
- 13 Before the Lord :
For He cometh to judge the earth :
He shall judge the world with righteousness,
And the people with His truth.

REFLECTIONS.

1. Our duty is to sing unto the Lord, to bless Him, and to proclaim Him to others. The name of the Lord, His salvation, glory, and wonders, are what we are to celebrate and declare. This is to be our work daily ; and we are to labour for the diffusion of divine truth through all lands.

2. The greatness of God is the point here dwelt upon. It is seen in creation : it is seen in the sanctuary. And how are we to act ? We are to fear Him, to worship Him, to ascribe to Him the glory that is due to Him.

3. As the greatness and glory of God are matters for praise and inducements to worship, so especially is His righteousness, manifested in His government now of the world, and in the judgment of the last day. Whatever confusion we see, we may well praise God

for His righteous dealings, aware that at the appointed time His righteousness will be made conspicuous before all the world.

PRAYER.

O Lord our God, give us a right understanding of Thy greatness, glory, and righteousness, that we may worship Thee with holy worship, and declare Thy praise with joyful hearts. Make Thy glory and goodness known in all lands: and may we, and all Thy faithful people, so walk before Thee that we may be approved in Thy sight both now and always, through our blessed and only Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

PSALM XCVII.

Displaying the divine perfections, as Psalm viii.

(I. *Majesty of God's kingdom.*)

- 1 The Lord reigneth ;
Let the earth rejoice ;
Let the multitude of isles be glad thereof.
- 2 Clouds and darkness are round about Him :
Righteousness and judgment
are the habitation of His throne.
- 3 A fire goeth before Him,
And burneth up His enemies round about.
- 4 His lightnings enlightened the world :
The earth saw and trembled.
- 5 The hills melted like wax
at the presence of the Lord,
At the presence of the Lord of the whole earth.

- 6 The heavens declare His righteousness,
And all the people see His glory.

(II. *Idolatry overthrown.*)

- 7 Confounded be all they that serve graven images,
That boast themselves of idols:
Worship Him, all ye gods.

(III. *The Church rejoices.*)

- 8 Zion heard, and was glad;
And the daughters of Judah rejoiced
Because of Thy judgments, O Lord.
9 For Thou, O Lord, art high above all the earth:
Thou art exalted far above all gods.

(IV. *Blessedness and duty of the righteous.*)

- 10 Ye that love the Lord, hate evil;
He preserveth the souls of His saints;
He delivereth them out of the hand of the wicked.
11 Light is sown for the righteous,
And gladness for the upright in heart.
12 Rejoice in the Lord, ye righteous;
And give thanks at the remembrance of
His holiness.

REFLECTIONS.

1. Jehovah reigns. What a source of consolation and joy! If darkness is about Him and His ways, yet we may be sure that He is just and holy in all His proceedings. We may look to Sinai; we may look to the final judgment; and learn how awful God is. He will destroy His enemies; and all the world shall see His righteousness and glory.

2. Confusion will be the portion of all idolaters. How careful should we be to keep ourselves from idols; to give our hearts to God; and to worship Him in spirit and in truth!

3. It is the duty of the Church and of each of her members to study and observe the righteous ways of God, and to rejoice in Him "as the blessed and only Potentate of heaven and earth."

4. Our duty, as those who love God, is to hate evil. Our blessedness is, to be assured of the divine preservation and goodness. Our proper feeling is gratitude and joy.

PRAYER.

Grant, O Lord, that we may rejoice in Thee as the Ruler of all things; that we may love and serve Thee with all the heart; that we may hate evil, and walk before Thee in uprightness of heart and conduct; and that we may praise and magnify Thee for all Thy gracious dealings with us; through Jesus Christ our Redeemer and Intercessor. Amen.

PSALM XCVIII.

DAY 19.]

EVENING PRAYER.

Thanksgiving, as Psalm xvi. Perhaps written by David after his victory over the Jebusites.

(I. *Exhortation to praise.*)

1 O sing unto the Lord a new song;
For He hath done marvellous things:

- His right hand, and His holy arm,
Hath gotten Him the victory.
- 2 The Lord hath made known His salvation :
His righteousness hath He openly showed
In the sight of the heathen.
- 3 He hath remembered His mercy and His truth
Toward the house of Israel :
All the ends of the earth
Have seen the salvation of our God.
- 4 Make a joyful sound unto the Lord, all the earth :
Make a loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise.
- 5 Sing unto the Lord with the harp ;
With the harp, and the voice of a psalm.
- 6 With trumpets and sound of cornet
Make a joyful noise before the Lord, the King.
- 7 Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof ;
The world, and they that dwell therein.
- 8 Let the floods clap their hands :
Let the hills be joyful together
- 9 Before the Lord ;
For He cometh to judge the earth :
With righteousness shall He judge the world,
And the people with equity.

REFLECTIONS.

Marvellous things, victory, salvation, righteousness, mercy, and truth—these are the subjects here mentioned as furnishing matter for lofty and animated praise. Such is the case as to the past ; and as concerns the future, we are reminded of the day when the Lord will judge the world in righteousness. If we meditate on the past history of the Church ; if we con-

sider the life and death, the resurrection and ascension of our blessed Lord ; and if we contemplate the last day, when it shall be rendered to every man according to his works ; we shall enter into the spirit of this Psalm ; and we shall see what great reason we have to “sing unto the Lord a new song ;” a song of peculiar excellence ; a song of joy, thanksgiving, and triumph.

PRAYER.

O Lord our God, help us to meditate on all Thy dealings with Thy Church ; and, whilst we see Thy mercy and love, Thy power and justice, may we praise Thy holy Name, and so live in faith and obedience, that in the last day we may be unproveable in Thy sight ; through Jesus Christ our Redeemer and Intercessor. Amen.

PSALM XCIX.

Displaying the divine perfections, as Psalm viii. Some refer this Psalm to the removal of the Ark to mount Zion, others to the dedication of the second temple.

(I. *Exhortation to worship.*)

- 1 The Lord reigneth ;
Let the earth tremble :
He sitteth between the cherubim ;
Let the earth be moved.
- 2 The Lord is great in Zion ;
And He is high above all the people.
- 3 Let them praise Thy great and terrible Name ;
For it is holy.

- 4 The king's strength also loveth judgment ;
Thou dost establish equity,
Thou executest judgment and righteousness in
Jacob.
- 5 Exalt ye the Lord our God,
And worship at His footstool ;
For He is holy.
- 6 Moses and Aaron among His priests,
And Samuel among them that call upon His Name ;
They called upon the Lord and He answered them.
- 7 He spake unto them in the cloudy pillar :
They kept His testimonies,
And the ordinance that He gave them.
- 8 Thou answeredst them, O Lord our God :
Thou wast a God that forgavest them,
Though Thou tookest vengeance of their in-
ventions.
- 9 Exalt the Lord our God,
And worship at His holy hill ;
For the Lord our God is holy.

REFLECTIONS.

The Lord ruleth over all, and especially He is great in His Church. We are to praise Him as One who is awful in majesty, unspotted in holiness, and righteous in all His dealings. We thus reflect on the holy, glorious, and gracious God ; and then it is our duty to magnify Him and to worship at His footstool. The faithful believers in old time acted thus ; they prayed, and their prayers were answered. He gave them instruction ; they kept His word ; and when they offended they were pardoned in mercy, though they

suffered punishment for their transgressions : and thus in them we have examples for our direction, encouragement, and warning.

PRAYER.

O great and glorious God, help us to meditate on Thy perfections and ways with adoring minds. Thou art holy, and all Thy ways are righteous. We bless Thee for having in these last days spoken unto us by Thy Son. Give us grace, we beseech Thee, to hear His voice, and to keep His commandments. Suffer us not at any time to follow our own inventions, and to incur Thy righteous displeasure. And may we always worship Thee with faith and humility, with joy and gratitude ; through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

 PSALM C.

General acknowledgment, as Psalm xxiii. Author uncertain.

(I. *Exhortation to worship and praise.*)

- 1 Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands.
- 2 Serve the Lord with gladness :
Come before His presence with singing.
- 3 Know ye that the Lord He is God :
It is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves ;
We are His people, and the sheep of His pasture.
- 4 Enter into His gates with thanksgiving,
And into His courts with praise :
Be thankful unto Him, and bless His Name.
- 5 For the Lord is good ;

His mercy is everlasting ;
And His truth endureth to all generations.

REFLECTIONS.

In the first verse the inhabitants of all lands are called upon to worship and praise the Lord.

In the second and fourth verses our duty is enjoined, and the manner in which it is to be performed is described. It is our duty to serve and worship God ; to come before His presence ; to enter into His gates ; into His courts. In doing this, our hearts should be full of joy and thankfulness, and our language should be that of praise.

In the third and fifth verses the reasons of the duty are stated. The Lord is God ; He is our Creator ; He is good ; His mercy is everlasting ; and His faithfulness and truth endure for ever.

PRAYER.

Enable us, O Lord, to understand these things, and give us grace to worship Thee in spirit and in truth. Help us seriously to consider who Thou art, and what we are : and may we always implore Thy mercy, trust in Thy faithfulness and truth, and praise Thee for Thy goodness ; through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

PSALM CI.

Instructive, as Psalm lxxxii. Written by David, probably, when he was made king of all the tribes.

(I. *Vow and profession of godliness.*)

- 1 I will sing of mercy and judgment:
Unto Thee, O Lord, will I sing.
- 2 I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way.
Oh when wilt Thou come unto me?
I will walk within my house with a perfect heart.
- 3 I will set no wicked things before mine eyes:
I hate the work of them that turn aside;
It shall not cleave to me.
- 4 A froward heart shall depart from me:
I will not know a wicked person.
- 5 Whoso privily slandereth his neighbour,
him will I cut off:
Him that hath a high look and a proud heart
will I not suffer.
- 6 Mine eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land,
That they may dwell with me:
He that walketh in a perfect way,
He shall serve me.
- 7 He that worketh deceit shall not work within my
house:
He that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight.
- 8 I will early destroy all the wicked of the land;
That I may cut off all wicked doers
from the city of the Lord.

REFLECTIONS.

The mercy of God and His judgment, His holy laws and righteous administration, are always fit sub-

jects for our songs; for our joyful acknowledgment. But we must be practical Christians; and here we learn how we ought to live. 1. As to ourselves, we must (verses 2, 3.) walk wisely in a perfect way—walk in our house with a perfect heart; and renounce and hate sin. 2. As to others, we must have no fellowship with the wicked; verses 4, 5, 7, 8. Our delight must be in the excellent of the earth: them we are to befriend, and with them we are to associate.

PRAYER.

Give us, O Lord, a true knowledge of mercy and judgment according to the Gospel of Christ. Give us grace to lead the true Christian life; abhorring evil, consulting the welfare of Thy people, separating ourselves from the workers of iniquity, and shining as lights in the world by walking wisely and with a true heart; to Thy honour and glory, through Jesus Christ our only Redeemer. Amen.

PSALM CII.

DAY 20.]

MORNING PRAYER.

Penitential. Supposed to have been written towards the close of the Captivity. Compare verses 25—27 with Heb. i. 10—12.

(*I. Prayer to be heard.*)

- 1 Hear my prayer, O Lord,
And let my cry come unto Thee.
- 2 Hide not Thy face from me in the day when I am
in trouble:

Incline Thine ear unto me ;
In the day when I call answer me speedily.

(II. *Complaint.*)

- 3 For my days are consumed like smoke,
And my bones are burned as a hearth.
- 4 My heart is smitten, and withered like grass ;
So that I forget to eat my bread.
- 5 By reason of the voice of my groaning
My bones cleave to my skin.
- 6 I am like a pelican of the wilderness :
I am like an owl of the desert.
- 7 I watch, and am
As a sparrow alone upon the house top.
- 8 Mine enemies reproach me all the day ;
And they that are mad against me are sworn
against me.
- 9 For I have eaten ashes like bread,
And mingled my drink with weeping,
- 10 Because of Thine indignation and Thy wrath :
For Thou hast lifted me up, and cast me down.
- 11 My days are like a shadow that declineth :
And I am withered like grass.

(III. *Comfort from God's eternity and goodness.*)

- 12 But Thou, Lord, shalt endure for ever ;
And Thy remembrance unto all generations.
- 13 Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Zion ;
For the time to favour her,
Yea, the set time, is come.
- 14 For Thy servants take pleasure in her stones,
And favour the dust thereof.
- 15 So the heathen shall fear the Name of the Lord,

- And all the kings of the earth Thy glory.
16 When the Lord shall build up Zion,
He shall appear in His glory.
17 He will regard the prayer of the destitute,
And not despise their prayer.
18 This shall be written for the generation to come :
And the people which shall be created shall praise
the Lord.
19 For He hath looked down from the height of His
sanctuary ;
From heaven did the Lord behold the earth ;
20 To hear the groaning of the prisoner :
To loose those that are appointed to death ;
21 To declare the Name of the Lord in Zion,
And His praise in Jerusalem ;
22 When the people are gathered together,
And the kingdoms to serve the Lord.

(IV. *Complaint, prayer, repose in God.*)

- 23 He weakened my strength in the way ;
He shortened my days.
24 I said, O my God, take me not away
in the midst of my days :
Thy years are throughout all generations.
25 Of old Thou hast laid the foundation of the earth :
And the heavens are the work of Thy hands.
26 They shall perish, but Thou shalt endure :
Yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment ;
As a vesture shalt Thou change them,
And they shall be changed.
27 But Thou art the same,
And Thy years shall have no end.

28 The children of Thy servants shall continue,
And their seed shall be established before Thee.

REFLECTIONS.

1. God is our refuge at all times : but never do we look to Him more singly, never call upon Him more earnestly, than in the time of trouble. Here we learn how to pray, and what to pray for.

2. So perhaps mourned the Jews at Babylon. So mourns the afflicted Church. So mourns the true penitent. Here is that sorrow, that humiliation, yea that distress, with which all the righteous are more or less acquainted.

3. All below is but as a passing shadow : but God is always the same : and His eternity and goodness are the comfort and support of His people. The Church may be afflicted for a season ; her faith and patience may be tried ; but her prayer shall be heard ; and she shall prosper and triumph. What is true of her, is true of each of her children.

4. In submission to God's will we may pray for prolonged days on earth, that we may glorify Him. But man is mortal : all creation is perishable : and where shall the Christian look for consolation ? To that blessed Saviour of whom it is said, "Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail." Immutability and perpetuity belong to Christ and to His Church. This is our comfort.

PRAYER.

Help us, O Lord, to meditate on these things : help us to apply them to ourselves. Fill our hearts with

deep humility, and godly sorrow: fill our hearts with joy and peace in believing. Grant that we and Thy whole Church may look unto Thy Son Jesus Christ, and glory in Him: and hasten that day when all the kingdoms shall serve the Lord. Amen.

PSALM CIII.

Thanksgiving, as Psalm xviii.

(I. *Gratitude.*)

- 1 Bless the Lord, O my soul:
And all that is within me bless His holy Name.
- 2 Bless the Lord, O my soul,
And forget not all His benefits:
- 3 Who forgiveth all thine iniquities;
Who healeth all thy diseases;
- 4 Who redeemeth thy life from destruction;
Who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies;
- 5 Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things;
So that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's.

(II. *God's goodness to Israel.*)

- 6 The Lord executeth righteousness
And judgment for all that are oppressed.
- 7 He made known his ways unto Moses,
His acts unto the children of Israel.

(III. *God's mercy to His servants.*)

- 8 The Lord is merciful and gracious,
Slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy.
- 9 He will not always chide:

- Neither will He keep His anger for ever.
10 He hath not dealt with us after our sins;
Nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.
11 For as the heaven is high above the earth,
So great is His mercy toward them that fear Him.
12 As far as the east is from the west,
So far hath He removed our transgressions from us.
13 Like as a father pitieth his children,
So the Lord pitieth them that fear Him.
14 For He knoweth our frame :
He remembereth that we are dust.
15 As for man, his days are as grass ;
As a flower of the field, so he flourisheth.
16 For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone ;
And the place thereof shall know it no more.
17 But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting
To everlasting upon them that fear Him,
And His righteousness unto children's children ;
18 To such as keep His covenant,
And to those that remember
His commandments to do them.
19 The Lord hath prepared His throne in the
heavens ;
And His kingdom ruleth over all.

(IV. *Praise.*)

- 20 Bless the Lord, ye His angels,
That excel in strength, that do His commandments,
Hearkening unto the voice of His word.
21 Bless ye the Lord, all ye His hosts ;
Ye ministers of His, that do His pleasure.
22 Bless the Lord, all His works

In all places of His dominion :
Bless the Lord, O my soul.

REFLECTIONS.

1. It is our duty to be thankful to God for the innumerable and inestimable blessings which He continually confers upon us. We are too apt to forget them : but we ought to remember them, and to bless Him for them with all the heart. He forgives our sins ; heals our spiritual as well as bodily diseases ; redeems us from destruction, preserving us amidst all dangers, and delivering us from eternal ruin ; encompasses us with proofs of His bounty and kindness, and gives us the good things of this world ; and satisfies us also with spiritual blessings, so that we rejoice as in the strength and health of a perpetual youth.

2. God is just in all His ways, and sooner or later He vindicates His oppressed people. The Israelites knew and saw His ways, as they were instructed and guided by Moses : we know and understand them more fully, being instructed by the great Prophet of the Church. Our gratitude should keep pace with our blessings ; keep pace with the knowledge that we possess.

3. Here the mercy of God is stated in the most impressive manner. He is slow to anger, though we provoke Him ; His chastisements are not continued always ; His mercy in the forgiveness of our sins is boundless ; and His compassions are those of a considerate Father : He deals with us as frail and perishable creatures. In His mercy that never fails, and in

His government over all things, we have abundant consolation.

4. All creation—the hosts above, and every thing below—is here called upon to bless the Lord. And each of us, as a partaker of His benefits, of His mercy, of His fatherly goodness and care, ought to say, “Bless the Lord, O my soul.”

PRAYER.

Give us, O Lord, a due sense of all Thy mercies; and fill our hearts with gratitude, and our lips with praise. Grant us grace to keep Thy covenant, and to do Thy commandments. Pardon our sins, renew our souls, pity our weakness, and cause our souls to prosper. Thus may we live in the faith and fear and love of Thee, and magnify Thee for ever, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PSALM CIV.

DAY 20.]

EVENING PRAYER.

Displaying the divine perfections, as Psalm viii. This Psalm has been ascribed to David. It dwells on temporal blessings, as the preceding dwelt on spiritual.

(*I. God's perfections displayed in creation.*)

1 Bless the Lord, O my soul.

O Lord my God, Thou art very great;
Thou art clothed with honour and majesty.

2 Who coverest Thyself with light as with a garment:
Who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain:

- 3 Who layeth the beams of His chambers in the
waters,
Who maketh the clouds His chariot :
Who walketh upon the wings of the wind :
4 Who maketh His angels spirits ;
His ministers a flaming fire :
5 Who laid the foundations of the earth,
That it should not be removed for ever.
6 Thou coveredst it with the deep as with a garment ;
The waters stood above the mountains.
7 At Thy rebuke they fled ;
At the voice of Thy thunder they hasted away.
8 They go up by the mountains ;
They go down by the valleys
Unto the place which Thou hast founded for them.
9 Thou hast set a bound that they may not pass over ;
That they turn not again to cover the earth.

(II. *In the provision made for all creatures.*)

- 10 He sendeth the springs into the valleys,
Which run among the hills.
11 They give drink to every beast of the field :
The wild asses quench their thirst.
12 By them shall the fowls of the heaven have their
habitation,
Which sing among the branches.
13 He watereth the hills from His chambers :
The earth is satisfied with the fruit of Thy works.
14 He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle,
And herb for the service of man :
That He may bring forth food out of the earth ;
15 And wine that maketh glad the heart of man,

And oil to make his face to shine,
And bread which strengtheneth man's heart.

- 16 The trees of the Lord are full of sap;
The cedars of Lebanon, which He hath planted;
17 Where the birds make their nests:
As for the stork, the fir trees are her house.
18 The high hills are a refuge for the wild goats;
And the rocks for the conies.

(III. *In the revolution of the sun and moon.*)

- 19 He appointed the moon for seasons:
The sun knoweth his going down.
20 Thou makest darkness, and it is night:
Wherein all the beasts of the forest do creep forth.
21 The young lions roar after their prey,
And seek their meat from God.
22 The sun ariseth, they gather themselves together,
And lay them down in their dens.
23 Man goeth forth unto his work
And to his labour until the evening.
24 O Lord, how manifold are Thy works!
In wisdom hast Thou made them all:
The earth is full of Thy riches.

(IV. *In the Sea.*)

- 25 So is this great and wide sea,
Wherein are things creeping innumerable,
Both small and great beasts.
26 There go the ships; there is that Leviathan,
Whom Thou hast made to play therein.

(V. *The dependence of all on God.*)

- 27 These all wait upon Thee;

That Thou mayest give them their meat
in due season.

- 28 That Thou givest them they gather :
Thou openest Thy hand, they are filled with good.
29 Thou hidest Thy face, they are troubled :
Thou takest away their breath, they die,
And return to their dust;
30 Thou sendest forth Thy Spirit, they are created :
And Thou renewest the face of the earth.

(VI. *God's glory and power.*)

- 31 The glory of the Lord shall endure for ever :
The Lord shall rejoice in His works.
32 He looketh on the earth, and it trembleth;
He toucheth the hills, and they smoke.

(VII. *Praise : end of the wicked.*)

- 33 I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live :
I will sing praise to my God while I have my being.
34 My meditation of Him shall be sweet :
I will be glad in the Lord.
35 Let the sinners be consumed out of the earth,
And let the wicked be no more.
Bless thou the Lord, O my soul.
Praise ye the Lord.

REFLECTIONS.

1. The works of creation ought to be contemplated by us with devout minds. They manifest the glory of the Creator. We look to the firmament above us; there are the clouds and winds; there are the ministers, seen and unseen, that do His pleasure. We look to the world in which we live; to the earth and

to the ocean, and particularly to the tides and waves ruled and restrained by a fixed law. How great is the Maker and Upholder of this vast creation ! How ought He to be admired, feared, and honoured !

2. Here is a subject for profitable meditation ;—the provision that is made for the support and comfort of the different classes of this world's inhabitants. The earth is watered by springs and rivers, and also from the clouds : it is thus made fruitful : beasts, great and small, birds, and man himself, are furnished with proper food. The birds sing among the trees ; and even the hills and rocks afford a dwelling and a shelter to various creatures. All this clearly shows us the goodness and lovingkindness of God.

3, 4. If we meditate on the revolution of the heavenly bodies ; on the regular succession of day and night ; or if we direct our attention to the sea, traversed by ships, and inhabited by innumerable creatures, both great and small ; we have additional evidence of God's adorable perfections.

5. All creatures depend upon God both for support and life. At the will of that Power which made them they flourish, and perish, and are revived. We should consider this in reference to ourselves, both as to the temporal and spiritual life ; and wait upon God, that He may be merciful to us.

6, 7. We meditate on the works of God ; we see in them the proofs of His glory and power. He is good and gracious to all His creatures ; but He is also holy and righteous, and will banish the ungodly from

His presence. Surely we ought to stand in awe of Him, and to sing His praise. Surely we ought to think on these things ; to bless the Lord ; and to call upon others to praise Him.

PRAYER.

Teach us, O Lord, to consider all Thy works with devout minds ; and while we learn from them Thy power, goodness, and wisdom, may our piety be enlarged, strengthened, and enlivened. While we see Thee in Thy works, may we also see Thee in Thy word : and may we be partakers of Thy mercy and grace, that we may be glad in Thee, and praise Thee here and for ever, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PSALM CV.

DAY 21.]

MORNING PRAYER.

Historical. Author, David. See 1 Chron. xvi. 8—22.

(I. *Exhortation to praise God for His works.*)

- 1 O give thanks unto the Lord ; call upon His Name :
Make known His deeds among the people.
- 2 Sing unto Him, sing psalms unto Him ;
Talk ye of all His wondrous works.
- 3 Glory ye in His holy Name :
Let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord.
- 4 Seek the Lord, and His strength :
Seek His face evermore.
- 5 Remember His marvellous works that He hath
done ;
His wonders, and the judgments of his mouth ;

(II. His dealings with the patriarchs.)

- 6 O ye seed of Abraham His servant,
Ye children of Jacob His chosen.
- 7 He is the Lord our God :
His judgments are in all the earth.
- 8 He hath remembered His covenant for ever,
The word which He commanded to a thousand
generations.
- 9 Which covenant He made with Abraham,
And His oath unto Isaac ;
- 10 And confirmed the same unto Jacob for a law,
And to Israel for an everlasting covenant :
- 11 Saying, Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan,
The lot of your inheritance :
- 12 When they were but a few men in number ;
Yea, very few, and strangers in it.
- 13 When they went from one nation to another,
From one kingdom to another people :
- 14 He suffered no man to do them wrong :
Yea, He reproved kings for their sakes ;
- 15 Saying, Touch not mine anointed,
And do my prophets no harm.
- 16 Moreover He called for a famine upon the land :
He brake the whole staff of bread.
- 17 He sent a man before them, even Joseph,
Who was sold for a servant :
- 18 Whose feet they hurt with fetters :
He was laid in iron :
- 19 Until the time that His word came :
The word of the Lord tried him.
- 20 The king sent and loosed him ;

- Even the ruler of the people, and let him go free.
- 21 He made him lord of his house,
And ruler of all his substance :
- 22 To bind his princes at his pleasure ;
And teach his senators wisdom.
- 23 Israel also came into Egypt ;
And Jacob sojourned in the land of Ham.
- 24 And He increased His people greatly ;
And made them stronger than their enemies.
- 25 He turned their heart to hate His people,
To deal subtilly with His servants.
- 26 He sent Moses His servant ;
And Aaron whom He had chosen.
- 27 They showed His signs among them,
And wonders in the land of Ham.
- 28 He sent darkness, and made it dark ;
And they rebelled not against His word.
- 29 He turned their waters into blood,
And slew their fish.
- 30 Their land brought forth frogs in abundance,
In the chambers of their kings.
- 31 He spake, and there came divers sorts of flies,
And lice in all their coasts.
- 32 He gave them hail for rain,
And flaming fire in their land.
- 33 He smote their vines also and their fig-trees ;
And brake the trees of their coasts.
- 34 He spake, and the locusts came,
And caterpillars, and that without number.
- 35 And did eat up all the herbs in their land,
And devoured the fruit of the ground.

- 36 He smote also the first-born in their land,
The chief of all their strength.
- 37 He brought them forth also with silver and gold ;
And there was not one feeble person
among their tribes.
- 38 Egypt was glad when they departed :
For the fear of them fell upon them.
- 39 He spread a cloud for a covering ;
And fire to give light in the night.
- 40 The people asked, and He brought quails,
And satisfied them with the bread of heaven.
- 41 He opened the rock, and the waters gushed out ;
They ran in the dry places like a river.
- 42 For He remembered His holy promise,
And Abraham his servant.
- 43 And He brought forth His people with joy,
And His chosen with gladness :
- 44 And gave them the lands of the heathen :
And they inherited the labour of the people ;
- 45 That they might observe His statutes,
And keep His laws.
Praise ye the Lord.

REFLECTIONS.

1. We have here a series of duties, so to speak, in the habitual performance of which we ought to live. God is revealed to us : we know His Name, Jehovah, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. We know His works and ways in creation and in providence. We know the judgments of His mouth ; His instructions, com-

mands, promises, and threats. And how ought we to act? We are here admonished to praise God; to call upon Him in prayer; to make known His will and ways to others; to speak of His works; to glory in His Name; to rejoice in Him; to seek His strength and His favour; and to remember His works and counsels. These are plain and important subjects: and happy is he who lays them to heart, and makes them the matters of constant practice!

2. The Psalmist had spoken of God's "wondrous works;" His miraculous deeds: and he now unfolds his meaning by giving us a concise view of the history of the Israelites from the days of Abraham to their settlement in Canaan under Joshua. 1. We see the patriarchs before the descent into Egypt; ver. 6—23. 2. We then see the Israelites in Egypt, and their deliverance out of it; ver. 24—38. 3. We see them in the wilderness; ver. 39—42. And, 4. We see them established in Canaan; ver. 43—45. In the whole of this history we see the truth, the power, and the goodness of God towards His people; guarding them, guiding them, delivering them from their enemies, and pouring His blessings upon them.

PRAYER.

Help us, O Lord, to meditate with delight, with joy and gratitude, on Thy gracious and wonderful ways with Thy Church. May we seek Thy favour; observe Thy statutes, and keep Thy laws; rejoice in Thy faithfulness, goodness, and power; and glory in Thy holy Name, and praise Thee for ever, through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

PSALM CVI.

DAY 21.]

EVENING PRAYER.

Historical. This Psalm records the offences of the Israelites.

(I. *Praise.*)

- 1 Praise ye the Lord.
O give thanks unto the Lord; for He is good :
For His mercy endureth for ever.
- 2 Who can utter the mighty acts of the Lord ?
Who can show forth His praise ?
- 3 Blessed are they that keep judgment,
And he that doeth righteousness at all times.

(II. *Prayer.*)

- 4 Remember me, O Lord,
With the favour that Thou bearest unto
Thy people :
O visit me with Thy salvation ;
- 5 That I may see the good of Thy chosen,
That I may rejoice in the gladness of Thy nation,
That I may glory with Thine inheritance.

(III. *Confession.*)

- 6 We have sinned with our fathers ;
We have committed iniquity,
We have done wickedly.

(IV. *Rebellion at the Red Sea.*)

- 7 Our fathers understood not Thy wonders in Egypt ;
They remembered not the multitude of Thy
mercies ;
But provoked Him at the sea,
even at the Red Sea.

- 8 Nevertheless He saved them for His Name's sake,
That He might make His mighty power
to be known.
- 9 He rebuked the Red Sea also, and it was dried up :
So He led them through the depths,
as through the wilderness.
- 10 And He saved them from the hand
of him that hated them,
And redeemed them from the hand of the enemy.
- 11 And the waters covered their enemies :
There was not one of them left.
- 12 Then believed they His words ;
They sang His praise.

(V. *In the wilderness.*)

- 13 They soon forgot His works ;
They waited not for His counsel :
- 14 But lusted exceedingly in the wilderness,
And tempted God in the desert.
- 15 And He gave them their request ;
But sent leanness into their soul.

(VI. *In the matter of Korah.*)

- 16 They envied Moses also in the camp,
And Aaron the saint of the Lord.
- 17 The earth opened and swallowed up Dathan,
And covered the company of Abiram.
- 18 And a fire was kindled in their company ;
The flame burned up the wicked.

(VII. *In that of the molten calf.*)

- 19 They made a calf in Horeb,
And worshipped the molten image.

- 20 Thus they changed their glory
Into the similitude of an ox that eateth grass.
21 They forgat God their Saviour,
Which had done great things in Egypt;
22 Wondrous things in the land of Ham,
And terrible things by the Red Sea.
23 Therefore He said that He would destroy them,
Had not Moses His chosen
Stood before Him in the breach,
To turn away His wrath,
lest He should destroy them.

(VIII. *At the report of the spies.*)

- 24 Yea, they despised the pleasant land,
They believed not His word :
25 But murmured in their tents,
And hearkened not unto the voice of the Lord.
26 Therefore He lifted up His hand against them,
To overthrow them in the wilderness :
27 To overthrow their seed also among the nations,
And to scatter them in the lands.

(IX. *In the matter of Baal-peor.*)

- 28 They joined themselves also unto Baal-peor,
And ate the sacrifices of the dead.
29 Thus they provoked Him to anger
with their inventions :
And the plague brake in upon them.
30 Then stood up Phinehas, and executed judgment :
And so the plague was stayed.
31 And that was counted unto him for righteousness
Unto all generations for evermore.

(X. At the waters of Meribah.)

- 32 They angered Him also at the waters of strife,
So that it went ill with Moses for their sakes :
33 Because they provoked His spirit,
So that he spake unadvisedly with his lips.

(XI. In mingling with idolaters.)

- 34 They did not destroy the nations,
Concerning whom the Lord commanded them :
35 But were mingled among the heathen,
And learned their works.
36 And they served their idols :
Which were a snare unto them.
37 Yea, they sacrificed their sons
And their daughters unto devils.
38 And shed innocent blood,
Even the blood of their sons and of their daughters,
Whom they sacrificed unto the idols of Canaan :
And the land was polluted with blood.
39 Thus were they defiled with their own works,
And went a whoring with their own inventions.

(XII. God's mercies and judgments.)

- 40 Therefore was the wrath of the Lord kindled
against His people,
Insomuch that He abhorred His own inheritance.
41 And He gave them into the hand of the heathen ;
And they that hated them ruled over them.
42 Their enemies also oppressed them,
And they were brought into subjection under their
hand.
43 Many times did He deliver them ;

- But they provoked Him with their counsel,
 And were brought low for their iniquity.
 44 Nevertheless He regarded their affliction,
 When he heard their cry:
 45 And He remembered for them His covenant,
 And repented according to the multitude of His
 mercies.
 46 He made them also to be pitied
 Of all those that carried them captives.

(XIII. *Prayer and praise.*)

- 47 Save us, O Lord our God,
 And gather us from among the heathen,
 To give thanks unto Thy holy Name,
 And to triumph in Thy praise.
 48 Blessed be the Lord God of Israel
 From everlasting to everlasting:
 And let all people say,
 Amen. Praise ye the Lord.

REFLECTIONS.

Compare this Psalm with the preceding; and how striking, but how painful and humiliating is the contrast! There we see the manifold goodness of God: here we see the manifold perverseness of man.

1. The mercy and goodness of God are inexhaustible subjects for thankfulness and praise. We here see who is truly blessed; he whose knowledge and faith produce right practice.

2. This is a prayer which we need daily to offer to God; that we may be visited with salvation, and enjoy the happiness and portion of His people.

3. We are sinful creatures; and in all our prayers confession of sin will have a place. "We have committed iniquity: we have done wickedly!" Who can approach God, having a just sense of his own character, and not make such an avowal?

4. Look upon the Israelites at the Red Sea; 5. In the wilderness; 6. In the matter of Korah; 7. In the matter of the molten calf at the foot of Sinai; 8. At the report of the unbelieving spies; 9. In the matter of Baal-peor; 10. At Meribah; 11. In mingling with idolaters. In all this we see the conduct of man; full of impiety, rebellion, and ingratitude: and we see, also, the dealings of God, marked with goodness, patience, and righteous severity. But let us look to ourselves, and ask how much of sin and provocation enter into our lives. How can we read the transgressions of the Israelites without being reminded of our own?

12. The conduct of God towards His people is here distinctly stated. The sum of all is this: He punished them for their sins; and in their affliction He heard their prayer, remembered His covenant, and dealt with them according to the multitude of His mercies. If we sin, God will punish us: if we pray, He will be gracious to us.

13. Pray we thus for salvation, that we may rejoice in God: and ascribe we all blessing and praise to the God of our salvation, who pardons our sins, restores our souls to health and peace, and causes us to experience His mercy, grace, and favour.

PRAYER.

May we humble ourselves before Thee, O Lord, at all times, under a just sense of our sins : and do Thou mercifully forgive us, and so endue us with grace and strength, that we may not provoke Thee to anger, but please Thee in all our ways. Living in faith and obedience, may we enjoy the happiness of Thy people, and evermore give thanks unto Thy holy Name, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

PSALM CVII.

DAY 22.]

MORNING PRAYER.

General acknowledgment, as Psalm xxiii. Supposed to have been written after the captivity.

(I. *Praise.*)

- 1 O give thanks unto the Lord ; for He is good :
For His mercy endureth for ever.
- 2 Let the redeemed of the Lord say so,
Whom He hath redeemed from the hand
of the enemy ;
- 3 And gathered them out of the lands,
From the east, and from the west,
From the north, and from the south.

(II. *Travellers returned home.*)

- 4 They wandered in the wilderness
in a solitary way ;
They found no city to dwell in.
- 5 Hungry and thirsty,
Their soul fainted in them.

- 6 Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble,
And He delivered them out of their distresses.
7 And He led them forth by the right way,
That they might go to a city of habitation.
8 Oh that men would praise the Lord for His goodness,
And for His wonderful works
to the children of men !
9 For He satisfieth the longing soul,
And filleth the hungry soul with goodness.

(III. *Prisoners rescued from captivity.*)

- 10 Such as sit in darkness and in the shadow of death,
Being bound in affliction and iron ;
11 Because they rebelled against the words of God,
And contemned the counsel of the Most High :
12 Therefore He brought down their heart with
labour ;
They fell down, and there was none to help.
13 Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble,
And He saved them out of their distresses.
14 He brought them out of darkness
and the shadow of death,
And brake their bands in sunder.
15 Oh that men would praise the Lord for His goodness,
And for His wonderful works to the children of
men !
16 For He hath broken the gates of brass,
And cut the bars of iron in sunder.

(IV. *The sick restored to health.*)

- 17 Fools because of their transgression,

- And because of their iniquities, are afflicted.
18 Their soul abhorreth all manner of meat ;
And they draw near unto the gates of death.
19 Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble,
And He saveth them out of their distresses.
20 He sent His word, and healed them,
And delivered them from their destructions.
21 Oh that men would praise the Lord for His goodness,
And for His wonderful works to the children of men !
22 And let them sacrifice the sacrifices
of thanksgiving,
And declare His works with rejoicing.

(V. *Mariners brought safe to port.*)

- 23 They that go down to the sea in ships,
That do business in great waters ;
24 These see the works of the Lord,
And His wonders in the deep.
25 For He commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind,
Which lifteth up the waves thereof.
26 They mount up to the heavens,
They go down again to the depths :
Their soul is melted because of trouble.
27 They reel to and fro,
and stagger like a drunken man,
And are at their wit's end.
28 Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble,
And He bringeth them out of their distresses.
29 He maketh the storm a calm,
So that the waves thereof are still.
30 Then are they glad because they be quiet ;

So He bringeth them unto their desired haven.

31 Oh that men would praise the Lord for His goodness,

And for His wonderful works to the children of men !

32 Let them exalt Him also

in the congregation of the people,

And praise Him in the assembly of the elders.

(VI. *God's providence over all.*)

33 He turneth rivers into a wilderness,

And the water-springs into dry ground :

34 A fruitful land into barrenness,

For the wickedness of them that dwell therein.

35 He turneth the wilderness into a standing water,

And dry ground into water-springs.

36 And there He maketh the hungry to dwell,

That they may prepare a city for habitation ;

37 And sow the fields, and plant vineyards,

Which may yield fruits of increase.

38 He blesseth them also,

so that they are multiplied greatly ;

And suffereth not their cattle to decrease.

39 Again, they are minished and brought low

Through oppression, affliction, and sorrow.

40 He poureth contempt upon princes,

And causeth them to wander in the wilderness,

where there is no way.

41 Yet setteth He the poor on high from affliction,

And maketh Him families like a flock.

42 The righteous shall see it, and rejoice :

And all iniquity shall stop her mouth.

43 Whoso is wise, and will observe these things,

Even they shall understand the lovingkindness
of the Lord.

REFLECTIONS.

1. God's people redeemed from Egypt, redeemed from Babylon, might well sing of mercy : and in what lofty strains will the Church celebrate the divine goodness when she shall form one assembly in the heavenly Canaan !

2. Thus God led Israel. They prayed, and were delivered and supported ; they were led by the right way. Such, too, is the Christian life. And shall we not praise God for His goodness ?

3. Sin is slavery ; and the slavery of sin is full of darkness and distress. If we rebel against God, we shall soon find ourselves in trouble. But if we turn to Him, He will hear our prayers, and deliver us from our fetters and darkness. Such is His goodness : such reason have we to praise Him.

4. Transgression is the cause of much of our affliction, of much of our bodily suffering. When we humble ourselves before God, He will heal us, comfort us, and deliver us from our distress. A fresh cause for praise and thanksgiving.

5. Are we like pilgrims in a wilderness ? We are also like mariners on the tumultuous ocean. How much of our life may be compared to a stormy voyage ! What is our comfort and security ? Christ, whom winds and seas obey, is with us, and He will bring us to the desired haven. Shall we not, therefore, exalt Him both in public and in private ?

6. Here we see the goodness of God stated in a general way. His ways are mercy and judgment. Prosperity and adversity are from Him: He lifteth up and casteth down. The workers of iniquity shall be silent, and the righteous shall rejoice before Him.

PRAYER.

Make us wise, O Lord, to observe and understand these things. Guide us in the wilderness of this world; lighten our darkness; break our chains; heal our diseases; preserve us in the voyage of life; keep us from sin and wickedness; hear our prayers; grant us prosperity; and cause us to rejoice in Thy loving-kindness, and to praise Thy holy Name, through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

PSALM CVIII.

DAY 22.]

EVENING PRAYER.

Thanksgiving, as Psalm xviii. See Psalm lvii. 8—12. and lx. 8—14.

(I. *Praise and prayer.*)

- 1 O God, my heart is fixed ;
I will sing and give praise, even with my glory.
- 2 Awake, psaltery and harp :
I myself will awake early.
- 3 I will praise Thee, O Lord, among the people :
And I will sing praises unto Thee among the nations.
- 4 For Thy mercy is great above the heavens :
And Thy truth reacheth unto the clouds.
- 5 Be Thou exalted, O God, above the heavens :

- And Thy glory above all the earth ;
 6 That Thy beloved may be delivered :
 Save with Thy right hand, and answer me.

(II. *Exaltation as a conqueror.*)

- 7 God hath spoken in His holiness ;
 I will rejoice, I will divide Shechem,
 And mete out the valley of Succoth.
 8 Gilead is mine ; Manasseh is mine ;
 Ephraim also is the strength of my head ;
 Judah is my lawgiver ;

(III. *Enemies subdued.*)

- 9 Moab is my washpot ;
 Over Edom will I cast out my shoe ;
 Over Philistia will I triumph.
 10 Who will bring me into the strong city ?
 Who will lead me into Edom ?
 11 Wilt not Thou, O God, who hast cast us off ?
 And wilt not Thou, O God, go forth with our hosts ?

(IV. *Prayer and assurance.*)

- 12 Give us help from trouble :
 For vain is the help of man.
 13 Through God we shall do valiantly :
 For He it is that shall tread down our enemies.

REFLECTIONS.

1. The mercy and faithfulness of God will always afford to His faithful people matter for contemplation and praise. To lofty praise they will add their fervent prayer, that His glory may be known, and His people delivered and saved from all their enemies.

2. God gave to David the united kingdom of Israel and Judah. O Thou Son of David, unite Jew and Gentile in one fold under Thy gracious and righteous government !

3. God made David a conqueror over all his enemies. Severe was the conflict ; but God went forth with His hosts. O Thou Son of David, go forth with Thy ministers, and enable them to destroy the strongholds of error and iniquity !

4. To Thee, O Lord, do we look, and not to man : Thou art our strength, and by Thee only can we do valiantly in subduing ourselves and others.

PRAYER.

We praise Thee, O Lord, for Thy mercy and truth : we pray to Thee for every blessing. Success is Thy gift. Subdue, we beseech Thee, the enemies of Thy truth, and unite all nations, that "the kingdoms of this world may become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ." Amen.

PSALM CIX.

Prayer, as Psalm iv. Written by David, probably, with reference to Abithophel : viewed prophetically it relates to Judas Iscariot.

(I. *Complaint.*)

- 1 Hold not Thy peace, O God of my praise ;
- 2 For the mouth of the wicked and the mouth
of the deceitful are opened against me :
They have spoken against me with a lying tongue.

- 3 They compassed me about also with words of
hatred ;
And fought against me without a cause.
4 For my love they are my adversaries :
But I give myself unto prayer.
5 And they have rewarded me evil for good,
And hatred for my love.

(II. *Judgment denounced.*)

- 6 Set Thou a wicked man over him :
And let Satan stand at his right hand.
7 When he shall be judged, let him be condemned :
And let his prayer become sin.
8 Let his days be few ;
And let another take his office.
9 Let his children be fatherless,
And his wife a widow.
10 Let his children be continually vagabonds, and beg ;
Let them seek their bread also
out of their desolate places.
11 Let the extortioner catch all that he hath ;
And let the stranger spoil his labour.
12 Let there be none to extend mercy unto him :
Neither let there be any to favour
his fatherless children.
13 Let his posterity be cut off ;
And in the generation following
let their name be blotted out.
14 Let the iniquity of his fathers
be remembered with the Lord ;
And let not the sin of his mother be blotted out.
15 Let them be before the Lord continually,

That He may cut off the memory of them
from the earth.

16 Because that he remembered not to show mercy,
But persecuted the poor and needy man,
That he might even slay the broken in heart.

17 As he loved cursing, so let it come unto him :
As he delighted not in blessing,
so let it be far from him.

18 As he clothed himself with cursing
like as with his garment,
So let it come into his bowels like water,
And like oil into his bones.

19 Let it be unto him as the garment
which covereth him,
And for a girdle wherewith he is girded continually.

20 Let this be the reward of mine adversaries
from the Lord,
And of them that speak evil against my soul.

(III. *Complaint and prayer.*)

21 But do Thou for me, O God the Lord,
For Thy Name's sake :
Because Thy mercy is good, deliver Thou me.

22 For I am poor and needy,
And my heart is wounded within me.

23 I am gone like the shadow when it declineth :
I am tossed up and down as the locust.

24 My knees are weak through fasting ;
And my flesh faileth of fatness.

25 I became also a reproach unto them :
When they looked upon me they shook their
heads.

- 26 Help me, O Lord my God :
O save me according to Thy mercy :
27 That they may know that it is Thy hand ;
That Thou, Lord, hast done it.
28 Let them curse, but bless Thou ;
When they arise, let them be ashamed ;
But let Thy servant rejoice.
29 Let mine adversaries be clothed with shame,
And let them cover themselves
with their own confusion, as with a mantle.

(IV. *Praise.*)

- 30 I will greatly praise the Lord with my mouth ;
Yea, I will praise Him among the multitude.
31 For He shall stand at the right hand of the poor,
To save him from those that condemn his soul.

REFLECTIONS.

1. Absalom, Ahithophel, and Judas Iscariot are now the characters that demand our attention. If David and our blessed Lord were thus tried, experiencing the falsehood, the hatred, the opposition, the ingratitude of men, let us not account it strange if we experience something of the same sort. In such circumstances it will be our wisdom to look to God in prayer for support.

2. This prophecy, for as such we view it, was fulfilled in the miserable end of the three offenders whose names we have mentioned. This part of the Psalm, therefore, is not to be regarded as an expression of private feeling, but a prophetic delineation of the awful consequences of ungodliness and sin. How much misery

do we, by our sins, not only bring upon ourselves, but also entail on our descendants !

3. Whatever we suffer, and however we may be distressed, the Psalmist is an example to be imitated ; but more especially He of whom the Psalmist was a type. Of Him it is said, that he “ committed himself to Him that judgeth righteously.”

4. Patient waiting upon God in prayer will soon lead to praise. The power, goodness, and righteousness of God will be made manifest. Shame and confusion will be the portion of the wicked ; but the righteous and devout, however tried for a season, shall rejoice in safety, honour, and happiness.

PRAYER.

In all our trials, O Lord, from the cruel conduct of wicked men, may we commit our cause to Thee. Inspire our souls with a hatred of sin. Be Thou our comforter and supporter in all our troubles : preserve us from all our enemies : and may we greatly praise Thee for all Thy goodness to us, through Jesus Christ our Redeemer and Advocate. Amen.

PSALM CX.

DAY 23.]

MORNING PRAYER.

Prophetical. Author, David. St. Matt. xxii. 44. Heb. v. and vii.

(*I. Christ's kingdom.*)

1 The Lord said unto my Lord,
Sit Thou at my right hand,

Until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool.

- 2 The Lord shall send the rod of Thy strength
out of Zion :

Rule Thou in the midst of Thine enemies.

- 3 Thy people shall be willing in the day of Thy
power,

In the beauties of holiness

from the womb of the morning :

Thou hast the dew of Thy youth.

(II. *Priesthood.*)

- 4 The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent,
Thou art a priest for ever
After the order of Melchizedek.

(III. *Conquests.*)

- 5 The Lord at Thy right hand
Shall strike through kings in the day of His wrath.
6 He shall judge among the heathen,
He shall fill the places with the dead bodies ;
He shall wound the heads over many countries.

(IV. *Sufferings and resurrection.*)

- 7 He shall drink of the brook in the way :
Therefore shall He lift up the head.

REFLECTIONS.

1. The Lord Jesus Christ is our King. He is exalted at the right hand of His Father. His word, with the blessed influences of the Holy Spirit, is the rod of His strength, by which He subdues men, and rules over them. His people are willing and prompt in the day of His power to submit to His authority, and to maintain His cause.

2. The Lord Jesus Christ is our Priest. We have an Intercessor above, an Advocate with the Father. He has offered the one great sacrifice; He lives to render it effectual; exercising an eternal and unchangeable priesthood.

3. The Lord Jesus Christ is a Conqueror. His Gospel has prevailed, and shall prevail. If the great of this world set themselves in opposition to Him and to His word, they imagine a vain thing.

4. The last verse is obscure. It may refer to the sufferings and consequent exaltation of our blessed Lord; and Heb. xii. 2. will be a proper comment upon it. It may mean, that He shall always advance in the conflict against His enemies, until He is Conqueror over all of them.

PRAYER.

O blessed Saviour, enlighten us by Thy word, subdue us by Thy grace, and make us to be of the number of Thy willing people, who obey Thee as their King and trust in Thee as their Priest. Send forth, we beseech Thee, Thy word out of Zion, and let Thy victorious power be known throughout the whole world. Amen.

PSALM CXI.

Displaying the divine perfections, as Psalm viii.

(I. *Praise.*)

1 Praise ye the Lord.

I will praise the Lord with my whole heart,

In the assembly of the upright, and in the congregation.

(II. *The works of God.*)

- 2 The works of the Lord are great,
Sought out of all them that have pleasure therein.
3 His work is honourable and glorious :
And His righteousness endureth for ever.
4 He hath made His wonderful works
to be remembered :
The Lord is gracious and full of compassion.

(III. *His mercies to the Church.*)

- 5 He hath given meat unto them that fear Him :
He will ever be mindful of His covenant.
6 He hath showed His people the power of His
works,
That He may give them the heritage of the hea-
then.

(IV. *Equity and stability of His counsels.*)

- 7 The works of His hand are verity and judgment ;
All His commandments are sure.
8 They stand fast for ever and ever,
And are done in truth and uprightness.
9 He sent redemption unto His people :
He hath commanded His covenant for ever :
Holy and reverend is His Name.

(V. *True wisdom.*)

- 10 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom :
A good understanding have all they
that do His commandments :
His praise endureth for ever.

REFLECTIONS.

1. To praise God, to praise Him with the whole heart, to praise Him publicly; this is our duty: and from the performance of that duty we derive much of our purest happiness.

2. God claims our praise on account of His works: all His works, and counsels, and dealings, are subjects which we ought to examine attentively; they are honourable and glorious; they demand our remembrance: they show not only His wisdom and power, but also His righteousness, kindness, and compassion.

3. God claims our unceasing praise, on account of His goodness to His people; for He supports their bodies and souls; He is faithful to His covenant, fulfilling His promises; and, as He gave to the chosen people the land of Canaan, He will give to all faithful souls the Canaan above, for an everlasting inheritance.

4. The truth and righteousness of God, the stability of His word and purpose, the redemption that He has sent us—all these things, being proofs of His holiness and majesty, furnish additional materials for praise.

5. The first step to true wisdom is religious fear. The fruit of true wisdom is obedience. The honour and praise of the truly wise man will endure for ever.

PRAYER.

Give us grace, O Lord, to meditate on all Thy works, on all Thy dealings with Thy Church, and on the

righteousness and stability of Thy counsels, that we may praise Thee with understanding minds: and may we so fear and obey Thee, that we may be wise unto salvation, and magnify Thee for ever, through Jesus Christ our Redeemer and Advocate. Amen.

PSALM CXII.

Instructive, as Psalm i., with which it may be usefully compared.

(I. *Promises belonging to godliness.*)

1 Praise ye the Lord.

Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord,
That delighteth greatly in His commandments.

2 His seed shall be mighty upon earth :

The generation of the upright shall be blessed.

3 Wealth and riches shall be in his house :

And his righteousness endureth for ever.

4 Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness :

He is gracious, and full of compassion, and righteous.

(II. *Blessedness of the godly.*)

5 A good man showeth favour, and lendeth :

He will guide his affairs with discretion.

6 Surely he shall not be moved for ever :

The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance.

7 He shall not be afraid of evil tidings :

His heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord.

8 His heart is established, he shall not be afraid,

Until he see his desire upon his enemies.

9 He hath dispersed, he hath given to the poor ;

His righteousness endureth for ever ;
His horn shall be exalted with honour.

(III. *Envy and misery of the wicked.*)

- 10 The wicked shall see it, and be grieved ;
He shall gnash with his teeth, and melt away :
The desire of the wicked shall perish.

REFLECTIONS.

1. The righteous are here described : they fear God, keep His commandments, and are compassionate and upright in their conduct with men. Their happiness is described : they prosper in the world ; God's blessing is on their offspring ; and in sorrow and trial they have joy and consolation.

2. Here again we see the good man in his principle ; he trusts in the Lord : in his conduct ; he is kind, discreet, and charitable : in his happiness ; he is free from fear, stands upon firm ground, shall be remembered with gratitude, and shall be exalted to everlasting honour.

3. The wicked look with envy on the good ; their life is vexation ; and their desire shall never be fulfilled, whether it be for the calamity of the good, or for their own exaltation and happiness.

PRAYER.

We praise Thee, O Lord, for all Thy goodness to Thy faithful people. May we follow them in our lives ; and thus may we enjoy the happiness and honour which are their portion. Thus be Thou merciful to us for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

PSALM CXIII.

Displaying the divine perfections, as Psalm viii. Psalm cxiii.—
cxviii. form the great Hallel, sung by the Jews at their solemn
festivals, and particularly at the Passover : St. Matt. xxvi. 30.

(I. God is to be praised for His greatness.)

- 1 Praise ye the Lord.
Praise, O ye servants of the Lord,
Praise the Name of the Lord.
- 2 Blessed be the Name of the Lord
From this time forth and for evermore.
- 3 From the rising of the sun unto the going down
of the same
The Lord's Name is to be praised.
- 4 The Lord is high above all nations,
And His glory above the heavens.

(II. For His goodness.)

- 5 Who is like unto the Lord our God,
Who dwelleth on high ;
- 6 Who humbleth Himself to behold the things
That are in heaven, and in the earth !
- 7 He raiseth up the poor out of the dust,
And lifteth the needy out of the dunghill ;
- 8 That He may set him with princes,
Even with the princes of His people.
- 9 He maketh the barren woman to keep house,
And to be a joyful mother of children.
Praise ye the Lord.

REFLECTIONS.

1. We ought to form the most elevated views of
God. He is "high above all nations, and His glory

above the heavens." He is the Creator of all things, the Ruler of all, and His perfection is far beyond the comprehension of created beings. We ought to praise Him, as infinite in glory; to bless Him, as infinite in goodness.

2. Here we see the condescension of God. Great as He is, He does not disregard the creatures whom He has made. His eye is fixed upon the inhabitants of heaven; it is equally fixed upon the inhabitants of earth: both alike are observed by Him. We also see His goodness. He lifteth up the poor, and comforteth the desolate. 1 Sam. ii. 5—8.

PRAYER.

O gracious God, fill our souls, we beseech Thee, with lofty views and with strong convictions of Thy glory and goodness, that we may praise and bless Thy great and holy Name. Thou art supreme in majesty and in lovingkindness: may we stand in awe of Thee, and love Thee, and order our conversation as Thy faithful servants; through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

PSALM CXIV.

DAY 23.]

EVENING PRAYER.

Displaying the divine perfections, as Psalm viii.

(Miracles of God's power.)

- 1 When Israel went out of Egypt,
The house of Jacob from a people
of strange language;

- 2 Judah was his sanctuary,
And Israel his dominion.
- 3 The sea saw it, and fled :
Jordan was driven back.
- 4 The mountains skipped like rams,
And the little hills like lambs.
- 5 What aileth thee, O thou sea, that thou fleddest ?
Thou Jordan, that thou wast driven back ?
- 6 Ye mountains, that ye skipped like rams ;
And ye little hills, like lambs ?
- 7 Tremble, thou earth, at the presence of the Lord,
At the presence of the God of Jacob ;
- 8 Which turneth the rock into a standing water,
The flint into a fountain of waters.

REFLECTIONS.

The pious Jew had various subjects for praise when he looked back upon the history of his nation ; upon the wonderful and gracious dealings of God towards His chosen people in Egypt, at the River Jordan, and in the wilderness. The Christian has the same, and, in addition to them, the wonderful acts of God in our redemption, and the support, guidance, and preservation of His Church.

PRAYER.

We now, O Lord, are Thy worshippers : we are the children of Thy kingdom. Great are the wonders which Thou hast wrought for us, and great is the goodness which Thou hast shown to us. May we meditate on these things, and glorify Thy holy Name for ever, through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

PSALM CXV.

Displaying the divine perfections, as Psalm viii. A song of triumph.

(I. *Ascription of glory to God.*)

- 1 Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us,
But unto Thy Name give glory,
For Thy mercy, and for Thy truth's sake.
- 2 Wherefore should the heathen say,
Where is now their God ?
- 3 But our God is in the heavens :
He hath done whatsoever He hath pleased.

(II. *Folly of Idolatry.*)

- 4 Their idols are silver and gold,
The work of men's hands.
- 5 They have mouths, but they speak not :
Eyes have they, but they see not :
- 6 They have ears, but they hear not :
Noses have they, but they smell not :
- 7 They have hands, but they handle not :
Feet have they, but they walk not :
Neither speak they through their throat.
- 8 They that make them are like unto them ;
So is every one that trusteth in them.

(III. *Exhortation to trust in God.*)

- 9 O Israel, trust thou in the Lord :
He is their help and their shield.
- 10 O house of Aaron, trust in the Lord :
He is their help and their shield.
- 11 Ye that fear the Lord, trust in the Lord :
He is their help and their shield.

(IV. *Prediction of prosperity.*)

- 12 The Lord hath been mindful of us :
He will bless us ; He will bless the house of Israel ;
He will bless the house of Aaron.
- 13 He will bless them that fear the Lord,
Both small and great.
- 14 The Lord shall increase you more and more,
You and your children.
- 15 Ye are blessed of the Lord
Which made heaven and earth.
- 16 The heaven, even the heavens, are the Lord's :
But the earth hath He given to the children of men.
- 17 The dead praise not the Lord,
Neither any that go down into silence.
- 18 But we will bless the Lord
From this time forth and for evermore.
Praise the Lord.

REFLECTIONS.

1. Herein is true humility : to ascribe all good to the divine mercy and faithfulness. Herein is true faith : though reproached, to hold fast our persuasion that our God is above, and rules over all.

2. What a melancholy proof does idolatry afford of man's folly, weakness, and wickedness ! How ought we to pity idolaters, and to pray and labour for their conversion !

3. God is our helper in difficulty and distress, and our defender in danger. How thankful should we be that we know Him as such ! How joyfully and implicitly should we trust in Him !

4. Look to the past time. God hath been "mindful of us," both in temporal and spiritual things. Look to the future. If we fear Him, He will bless us; so bless us that we shall have abundant reason to bless Him "from this time forth and for evermore."

PRAYER.

Fill our souls, O Lord, with humility and faith; make us thankful for our knowledge of Thee; may we trust in Thee and fear Thee; and bless us with Thy grace and protection; that we may praise Thee in life, and in death, and for evermore: through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

PSALM CXVI.

DAY 24.]

MORNING PRAYER.

Thanksgiving, as Psalm xviii. Some ascribe it to David; others to some one after the captivity.

(I. *An assertion and a resolve.*)

- 1 I love the Lord,
Because He hath heard my voice and my supplications.
- 2 Because He hath inclined His ear unto me,
Therefore will I call upon Him as long as I live.

(II. *Distress, deliverance, and peace described.*)

- 3 The sorrows of death compassed me,
And the gates of hell gat hold upon me:
I found trouble and sorrow.
- 4 Then called I upon the Name of the Lord;

- O Lord, I beseech Thee, deliver my soul.
5 Gracious is the Lord, and righteous;
Yea, our God is merciful.
6 The Lord preserveth the simple :
I was brought low, and He helped me.
Return unto thy rest, O my soul;
For the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee.
8 For thou hast delivered my soul from death,
Mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling.
9 I will walk before the Lord
In the land of the living.

(III. *Faith: Impatience.*)

- 10 I believed, therefore have I spoken :
I was greatly afflicted.
11 I said in my haste,
All men are liars.

(IV. *Resolve to be thankful; to worship God.*)

- 12 What shall I render unto the Lord
For all His benefits toward me ?
13 I will take the cup of salvation,
And call upon the Name of the Lord.
14 I will pay my vows unto the Lord
Now in the presence of all His people.
15 Precious in the sight of the Lord
Is the death of His saints.
16 O Lord, truly I am Thy servant;
I am Thy servant, and the son of Thy handmaid :
Thou hast loosed my bonds.
17 I will offer to Thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving,
And will call upon the Name of the Lord.
18 I will pay my vows unto the Lord

Now in the presence of all His people,
19 In the courts of the Lord's house,
In the midst of Thee, O Jerusalem.
Praise ye the Lord.

REFLECTIONS.

1. When our prayers are answered, we have an additional motive to love God, and also to renew our prayers to Him.

2. Here we see the Christian in trouble and sorrow; we see him in earnest devotion; we see his thankful and joyful acknowledgment; and we see him in his fixed resolution. We must expect trials and grief: but let us turn to God in serious prayer; and we shall assuredly experience the divine mercy. He will preserve us, help us, deliver us, and deal bountifully with us. How shall we then show our gratitude? By making God our rest, and walking before Him in all holy obedience.

3. When faith prevails, we shall speak of God's goodness; when we are unduly influenced by our perverse nature we look to men, and are fretful and dissatisfied because they afford us no relief. Faith in God is our support and peace in affliction.

4. See here true gratitude and its fruits. We must take the cup of salvation: we must give thanks for the benefits we have received. To our thanks, we must add our prayers. And this must be done publicly, for the edification of God's people.

PRAYER.

O blessed God, whatever our sorrows and troubles may be, help us to call upon Thee in fervent prayer. Deal with us according to Thy mercy and goodness: fill our hearts with the love of Thee: and whilst we thank Thee for Thy lovingkindness, may we rest in Thee, and walk before Thee, to Thy honour and glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PSALM CXVII.

General acknowledgment of God's goodness and mercy, as Psalm xxiii.

(God to be praised for His mercy and truth.)

- 1 O praise the Lord, all ye nations :
Praise Him, all ye people.
- 2 For His merciful kindness is great towards us :
And the truth of the Lord endureth for ever.
Praise ye the Lord.

REFLECTIONS.

Praise is the duty here enjoined : the Lord Jehovah is the Being whom we are to praise. All nations, all people, should unite in this delightful work. His merciful kindness towards us, both in temporal and spiritual matters, and the perpetuity of His truth and faithfulness, may well be at all times the subjects of our joyful songs.

PRAYER.

Fill our minds and hearts, O Lord, with lofty views and with lively convictions of Thy mercy and truth :

and grant that we may begin on earth those songs of praise which shall be continued through eternal ages; through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

PSALM CXVIII.

Prophetical. The king of Israel leads His people in solemn procession to the temple, to offer praise and thanksgiving for deliverance and victory. The king in so doing was a type of Christ triumphing over His enemies by His resurrection and ascension. It admits, however, of an application to every sincere Christian; and taken in that view, also, it gives us much instruction and consolation.

(I. God is to be praised for His mercy.)

- 1 O give thanks unto the Lord; for He is good :
Because His mercy endureth for ever.
- 2 Let Israel now say,
That His mercy endureth for ever.
- 3 Let the house of Aaron now say,
That His mercy endureth for ever.
- 4 Let them now that fear the Lord say,
That His mercy endureth for ever.

(II. Excellence of trusting in God.)

- 5 I called upon the Lord in distress :
The Lord answered me, and set me in a large place.
- 6 The Lord is on my side; I will not fear :
What can man do unto me ?
The Lord taketh my part with them that help me :
Therefore shall I see my desire upon them that
hate me.
- 8 It is better to trust in the Lord
Than to put confidence in man.

- 9 It is better to trust in the Lord
Than to put confidence in princes.

(III. *Enemies : their destruction.*)

- 10 All nations compassed me about :
But in the Name of the Lord will I destroy them.
11 They compassed me about ; yea, they compassed
me about :
But in the Name of the Lord I will destroy them.
12 They compassed me about like bees ;
They are quenched as the fire of thorns ;
For in the Name of the Lord I will destroy them.
13 Thou hast thrust sore at me that I might fall :
But the Lord helped me.

(IV. *God is our strength.*)

- 14 The Lord is my strength and song,
And is become my salvation

(V. *Rejoicing for victory.*)

- 15 The voice of rejoicing and salvation
Is in the tabernacle of the righteous ;
The right hand of the Lord doeth valiantly.
16 The right hand of the Lord is exalted :
The right hand of the Lord doeth valiantly.

(VI. *Admission into the temple solicited.*)

- 17 I shall not die, but live,
And declare the works of the Lord.
18 The Lord hath chastened me sore :
But He hath not given me over unto death.
19 Open to me the gates of righteousness :
I will go in to them, and I will praise the Lord :

(VII. The Gate opened : Praise offered.)

- 20 This gate of the Lord,
 Into which the righteous shall enter.
21 I will praise Thee : for Thou hast heard me,
 And art become my salvation.

(VIII. The hand of the Lord acknowledged.)

- 22 The Stone which the builders refused
 Is become the Head Stone of the corner.
23 This is the Lord's doing ;
 It is marvellous in our eyes.
24 This is the day which the Lord hath made ;
 We will rejoice and be glad in it.

(IX. Prayer and congratulation.)

- 25 Save now, I beseech Thee, O Lord :
 O Lord, I beseech Thee, send now prosperity.
26 Blessed be he that cometh in the Name of the
 Lord :
 We have blessed you out of the house of the Lord.

(X. Praise.)

- 27 God is the Lord, which hath showed us light :
 Bind the sacrifice with cords,
 Even unto the horns of the altar.
28 Thou art my God, and I will praise Thee :
 Thou art my God, I will exalt Thee.
29 O give thanks unto the Lord ; for He is good :
 For His mercy endureth for ever.

REFLECTIONS.

1. It is the duty of the whole Church, of ministers and of people, to give thanks unto the Lord ; always

avowing "that He is good, and that His mercy endureth for ever."

2. Troubles and trials we shall have ; but, instead of looking to man, we must trust in God ; then we may dismiss fear, and be persuaded that we shall soon obtain deliverance, and rejoice in liberty and comfort.

3—5. The Church, as well as its individual members, has many enemies to encounter ; but God is our strength and salvation, and through Him we do valiantly, discomfit our enemies, and are more than conquerors. Hence the voice of rejoicing and salvation is heard in our dwellings.

6, 7. When the afflicted are comforted and restored to health and peace, they will be anxious to praise God in His house of prayer, and there to acknowledge publicly His goodness to them.

8. These verses (St. Matt. xxi. 42.) refer to our blessed Lord : He is the foundation of our hopes : rejected by men ; but chosen of God. We live in "the accepted time:" O that we may know our blessings, and rejoice and be glad ! "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift."

9. Thus pray we for the prosperity of Christ's kingdom ; for the success of the Gospel. Thus bless we our gracious Saviour, and pray for blessings on His faithful people.

10. God hath showed us light : therefore let us offer unto Him spiritual sacrifices ; praise Him, exalt

Him, and give thanks to Him; "for He is good; for His mercy endureth for ever."

PRAYER.

O gracious God, help us always to trust in Thee, and to rejoice in Thy mercy. May we rest on the only foundation of hope, and by Thy strength vanquish all our enemies. And may we thank and praise Thee for Thy goodness and mercy both here and for ever, through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

PSALM CXIX.

DAY 24.]

EVENING PRAYER.

Instructive, as Psalm xix. It is ascribed to David.

PART 1. ALEPH.

- 1 Blessed are the undefiled in the way,
Who walk in the law of the Lord.
- 2 Blessed are they that keep His testimonies,
And that seek Him with the whole heart.
- 3 They also do no iniquity :
They walk in His ways.
- 4 Thou hast commanded us
To keep Thy precepts diligently.
- 5 O that my ways were directed
To keep Thy statutes !
- 6 Then shall I not be ashamed,
When I have respect unto all Thy commandments.
- 7 I will praise Thee with uprightness of heart,
When I shall have learned Thy righteous judgments.

- 8 I will keep Thy statutes:
O forsake me not utterly.

REFLECTIONS.

Would we be truly blessed? We must seek God with the whole heart, and obey His laws. Our obedience must be diligent and universal. When we rightly believe and rightly act, we shall praise God: and our resolve will be, to persevere in our righteous course; and our prayer will be, that God will not forsake us; not leave us to ourselves.

PART 2. BETH.

- 9 Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way?
By taking heed thereto according to Thy word.
- 10 With my whole heart have I sought Thee:
O let me not wander from Thy commandments.
- 11 Thy word have I hid in my heart,
That I might not sin against Thee.
- 12 Blessed art Thou, O Lord:
Teach me Thy statutes.
- 13 With my lips have I declared
All the judgments of Thy mouth.
- 14 I have rejoiced in the way of Thy testimonies,
As much as in all riches.
- 15 I will meditate in Thy precepts,
And have respect unto Thy ways.
- 16 I will delight myself in Thy statutes:
I will not forget Thy word.

REFLECTIONS.

If we would lead holy lives, we must obey God's word; we must seek Him, and pray to be kept from

wandering out of the way of obedience. If we would treat the word of God aright, and be kept from sin, we must treasure it in our hearts, meditate upon it, delight in it, and pray that we may understand it. He who makes the resolve in verses 15, 16, and is faithful to it, will rejoice in the way of piety, and speak much also for the benefit of others. Verse 13.

PART 3. GIMEL.

- 17 Deal bountifully with Thy servant,
That I may live, and keep Thy word.
- 18 Open Thou mine eyes,
That I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law.
- 19 I am a stranger in the earth ;
Hide not Thy commandments from me.
- 20 My soul breaketh for the longing
That it hath unto Thy judgments at all times.
- 21 Thou hast rebuked the proud that are cursed,
Which do err from Thy commandments.
- 22 Remove from me reproach and contempt ;
For I have kept Thy testimonies.
- 23 Princes also did sit and speak against me :
But Thy servant did meditate in Thy statutes.
- 24 Thy testimonies also are
My delight and my counsellors.

REFLECTIONS.

Our living as true Christians depends on God's mercy and grace to us ; and for these blessings, as for every other, we must pray to Him. He only can give us the saving knowledge of divine truth ; and this we

ought most earnestly to seek. We need not regard the reproach of men, if we make God's word our delight and counsellor. He will rebuke the proud opposers of His truth, and exalt its faithful disciples to honour and happiness.

PART 4. DALETH.

- 25 My soul cleaveth unto the dust :
 Quicken Thou me according to Thy word.
- 26 I have declared my ways, and Thou heardest me : .
 Teach me Thy statutes.
- 27 Make me to understand the way of Thy precepts :
 So shall I talk of Thy wondrous works.
- 28 My soul melteth for heaviness :
 Strengthen Thou me according unto Thy word.
- 29 Remove from me the way of lying :
 And grant me Thy law graciously.
- 30 I have chosen the way of truth :
 Thy judgments have I laid before me.
- 31 I have stuck unto Thy testimonies :
 O Lord, put me not to shame.
- 32 I will run the way of Thy commandments,
 When Thou shalt enlarge my heart.

REFLECTIONS.

In danger we pray for preservation ; in heaviness and grief, for strength and comfort. We always need more instruction ; a deeper understanding of divine things : and happy are we if we seek and obtain it : for then we shall avoid every false way ; we shall keep the word of God in view, and firmly cleave to it ; and we shall proceed with alacrity in the way of obedience,

when God is pleased to enlarge our minds and hearts by His enlightening and enlivening grace.

PART 5. HE.

DAY 25.] MORNING PRAYER.

- 33 Teach me, O Lord, the way of Thy statutes ;
And I shall keep it unto the end.
- 34 Give me understanding, and I shall keep Thy law :
Yea, I shall observe it with my whole heart.
- 35 Make me to go in the path of Thy commandments :
For therein do I delight.
- 36 Incline my heart unto Thy testimonies,
And not to covetousness.
- 37 Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity ;
And quicken Thou me in Thy way.
- 38 Stablish Thy word unto Thy servant,
Who is devoted to Thy fear.
- 39 Turn away my reproach which I fear ;
For Thy judgments are good.
- 40 Behold, I have longed after Thy precepts :
Quicken me in Thy righteousness.

REFLECTIONS.

What we need, in order to be pious, and perseveringly so, is a right understanding of God's word, and a heart rightly disposed towards it. For these we must daily pray. We must beware of covetousness and vanity; and we must always ask for divine grace, for by this only can we continue devoted to the fear of God, escape reproach, and manifest the excellence and enjoy the blessedness of true piety.

PART 6. VAU.

- 41 Let Thy mercies come also unto me, O Lord,
Even Thy salvation, according to Thy word.
- 42 So shall I have wherewith to answer him that
reproacheth me :
For I trust in Thy word.
- 43 And take not the word of truth utterly out of my
mouth ;
For I have hoped in Thy judgments.
- 44 So shall I keep Thy law continually
For ever and ever.
- 45 And I will walk at liberty :
For I seek Thy precepts.
- 46 I will speak of Thy testimonies also before kings,
And will not be ashamed.
- 47 And I will delight myself in Thy commandments,
Which I have loved ;
- 48 My hands also will I lift up unto Thy command-
ments,
Which I have loved.
And I will meditate in Thy statutes.

REFLECTIONS.

If God vouchsafe to visit us with salvation, we shall be able to answer our adversaries. If human weakness threatens to prevail against our piety, still we must trust, hope, and keep God's law. Then we shall be able to speak boldly of divine truth, even before kings, and not be ashamed. Take we care that we delight in, meditate upon, and live by, the divine commandments.

PART 7. ZAIN.

- 49 Remember the word unto Thy servant,

- Upon which Thou hast caused me to hope.
50 This is my comfort in my affliction :
For Thy word hath quickened me.
51 The proud have had me greatly in derision ;
Yet have I not declined from Thy law.
52 I remembered thy judgments of old, O Lord ;
And have comforted myself.
53 Horror hath taken hold upon me
Because of the wicked that forsake Thy law.
54 Thy statutes have been my songs
In the house of my pilgrimage.
55 I have remembered Thy Name, O Lord, in the
night,
And have kept thy law.
56 This I had, because I kept Thy precepts.

REFLECTIONS.

We are liable to affliction. We are surrounded with the wicked. Such is our condition here. But we have support and comfort. We hope in God's word; it enlivens our souls; we remember it, and cleave to it; we deplore the conduct and condition of the ungodly: and what is the happy result? The word of God (its gracious doctrines, its discoveries, its precepts, and its promises) furnishes us with abundant materials for songs of praise and thanksgiving in the house of our pilgrimage.

PART 8. CHETH.

- 57 Thou art my portion, O Lord :
I have said that I would keep Thy word.
58 I intreated Thy favour with my whole heart :
Be merciful unto me according to Thy word.

- 59 I thought on my ways,
And turned my feet unto Thy testimonies.
- 60 I made haste, and delayed not
To keep Thy commandments.
- 61 The bands of the wicked have robbed me ;
But I have not forgotten Thy law.
- 62 At midnight I will rise to give thanks unto Thee,
Because of Thy righteous judgments.
- 63 I am a companion of all them that fear Thee,
And of them that keep Thy precepts.
- 64 The earth, O Lord, is full of Thy mercy :
Teach me Thy statutes.

REFLECTIONS.

God is the portion of His faithful people. They seek His favour and mercy, and obey His commands. They think on their ways, and turn their feet into the path of obedience. Though surrounded with wicked men, they remember the divine law. Thus living in faith and righteousness, they experience the goodness of God, give thanks to Him at all times, and associate with those who fear Him. Be such our life, O Lord, through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

PART 9. TETH.

- 65 Thou hast dealt well with Thy servant, O Lord,
According unto Thy word.
- 66 Teach me good judgment and knowledge ;
For I have believed Thy commandments.
- 67 Before I was afflicted I went astray :
But now have I kept Thy word.
- 68 Thou art good, and doest good ;
Teach me Thy statutes.
- 69 The proud have forged a lie against me :

- But I will keep Thy precepts with my whole heart.
70 Their heart is as fat as grease;
But I delight in Thy law.
71 It is good for me that I have been afflicted;
That I might learn Thy statutes.
72 The law of Thy mouth is better unto me
Than thousands of gold and silver.

REFLECTIONS.

We ought to acknowledge with gratitude God's gracious dealings with us; and particularly the blessing and benefit of sanctified affliction. God is good, and does good; and to Him we should continually pray for instruction and grace, that we may in all things live more and more in agreement with His word. The more we know of true piety, the more shall we delight in it, and be convinced of its excellence and inestimable value.

PART 10. JOD.

DAY 25.] EVENING PRAYER.

- 73 Thy hands have made and fashioned me:
Give me understanding,
that I may learn Thy commandments.
74 They that fear Thee will be glad when they see me;
Because I have hoped in Thy word.
75 I know, O Lord, that Thy judgments are right,
And that Thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me.
76 Let, I pray Thee,
Thy merciful kindness be for my comfort,
According to Thy word unto Thy servant.
77 Let Thy tender mercies come unto me,
that I may live:

For Thy law is my delight.

- 78 Let the proud be ashamed ;
 For they dealt perversely with me without a cause :
 But I will meditate in Thy precepts.
- 79 Let those that fear Thee turn unto me,
 And those that have known Thy testimonies.
- 80 Let my heart be sound in Thy statutes ;
 That I be not ashamed.

REFLECTIONS.

He who has made us, and He only, can enlighten our minds, and plant the fear of Himself in our hearts. He afflicts us for our benefit : and by his tender mercies we live and enjoy true consolation. Daily let our prayers ascend to Him through our great and only Mediator : daily let us pray that our hearts may be sound in His statutes ; and thus we shall never be ashamed.

PART II. CAPH.

- 81 My soul fainteth for Thy salvation :
 But I hope in Thy word.
- 82 Mine eyes fail for Thy word, saying,
 When wilt Thou comfort me ?
- 83 For I am become like a bottle in the smoke ;
 Yet do I not forget Thy statutes.
- 84 How many are the days of Thy servant ?
 When wilt Thou execute judgment
 on them that persecute me ?
- 85 The proud have digged pits for me,
 Which are not after Thy law.
- 86 All Thy commandments are faithful :
 They persecute me wrongfully ; help Thou me.

- 87 They had almost consumed me upon earth ;
But I forsook not Thy precepts.
88 Quicken me after Thy lovingkindness ;
So shall I keep the testimony of Thy mouth.

REFLECTIONS.

The first three verses describe a painful state of mind ; but there is the substance of true piety in it ; faith, earnest desire, and remembrance of God's word. Our days are few ; our enemies are many ; we may be reduced to great straits ; but all is well with us, if we look to God, commit ourselves to Him, remain steadfast in His ways, and earnestly seek His quickening grace, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

PART 12. LAMED.

- 89 For ever, O Lord,
Thy word is settled in heaven.
90 Thy faithfulness is unto all generations :
Thou hast established the earth, and it abideth.
91 They continue this day according to Thine ordinances :
For all are Thy servants.
92 Unless Thy law had been my delight,
I should have perished in mine affliction.
93 I will never forget Thy precepts :
For with them Thou hast quickened me.
94 I am Thine, save me ;
For I have sought Thy precepts.
95 The wicked have waited for me to destroy me :
But I will consider Thy testimonies.
96 I have seen an end of all perfection :
But Thy commandment is exceeding broad.

REFLECTIONS.

In God and in His word we see stability : great, then, is their happiness whose portion is God, and whose guide is His word. In the day of affliction, especially, we know the value of the divine truth. Should the wicked plot against us, God will be our Preserver and Deliverer, if we forget not, but duly consider, His testimonies. The perfection of this world is limited; we soon see an end of it: but the perfection of God's word is boundless, and we can never grasp it.

PART 13. MEM.

97 O how I love Thy law !

It is my meditation all the day.

98 Thou through Thy commandments hast made me
wiser than mine enemies :

For they are ever with me.

99 I have more understanding than all my teachers :
For Thy testimonies are my meditation.

100 I understand more than the ancients,
Because I keep Thy precepts.

101 I have refrained my feet from every evil way,
That I might keep Thy word.

102 I have not departed from Thy judgments :
For Thou hast taught me.

103 How sweet are Thy words unto my taste !
Yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth !

104 Through Thy precepts I get understanding :
Therefore I hate every false way.

REFLECTIONS.

If we love the word of God, meditate upon it, and obey it, we shall be truly wise; wiser than our enemies;

wiser than many of the aged. He who is divinely taught will hate every false way, refrain from evil, and walk in Christ's law. The more true we thus are to divine wisdom, the more delight and pleasantness we shall find in it and in its ways.

PART 14. NUN.

DAY 26.] MORNING PRAYER.

- 105 Thy word is a lamp unto my feet,
And a light unto my path.
- 106 I have sworn, and I will perform it,
That I will keep Thy righteous judgments.
- 107 I am afflicted very much:
Quicken me, O Lord, according unto Thy word.
- 108 Accept, I beseech Thee,
the freewill offerings of my mouth,
O Lord, and teach me Thy judgments.
- 109 My soul is continually in my hand:
Yet do I not forget Thy law.
- 110 The wicked have laid a snare for me:
Yet I erred not from Thy precepts.
- 111 Thy testimonies have I taken
as my heritage for ever:
For they are the rejoicing of my heart.
- 112 I have inclined my heart to perform
Thy statutes always,
Even unto the end.

REFLECTIONS.

Happy is he who takes the word of God for his guide, and who resolves, in the strength of divine grace, to obey its precepts. We may be very much afflicted,

have many enemies, and be in great danger : but all will be well with us, if we pray to God for grace and knowledge ; if we do not forget His law, nor wander from it. Let us choose God's word for our heritage ; let us live always in obedience to it ; and it will not fail to be the rejoicing of our hearts.

PART 15. SAMECH.

- 113 I hate vain thoughts :
But Thy law do I love.
- 114 Thou art my hiding-place and my shield :
I hope in Thy word.
- 115 Depart from me, ye evil doers :
For I will keep the commandments of my God.
- 116 Uphold me according to Thy word,
that I may live :
And let me not be ashamed of my hope.
- 117 Hold Thou me up, and I shall be safe :
And I will have respect unto Thy statutes
continually.
- 118 Thou hast trod down all them that err
from Thy statutes :
For their deceit is falsehood.
- 119 Thou putttest away all the wicked of the earth
like dross :
Therefore I love Thy testimonies.
- 120 My flesh trembleth for fear of Thee ;
And I am afraid of Thy judgments.

REFLECTIONS.

We must hate vain opinions, and love divine truth. We must look to God as our refuge and defence, and hope in His word. To Him we must address our prayer

for guidance and strength, that we may be safe and walk continually in the way of true obedience. We see His righteous judgments in the case of the wicked; and these clearly show His hatred of sin: well, then, may we stand in awe of Him, and fear to offend Him.

PART 16. AIN.

- 121 I have done judgment and justice :
 Leave me not to mine oppressors.
122 Be surety for Thy servant for good :
 Let not the proud oppress me.
123 Mine eyes fail for Thy salvation,
 And for the word of Thy righteousness.
124 Deal with Thy servant according unto Thy mercy,
 And teach me Thy statutes.
125 I am Thy servant; give me understanding,
 That I may know Thy testimonies.
126 It is time for Thee, Lord, to work :
 For they have made void Thy law.
127 Therefore I love Thy commandments above gold;
 Yea, above fine gold.
128 Therefore I esteem all Thy precepts
 concerning all things to be right;
 And I hate every false way.

REFLECTIONS.

He who does what is right may have enemies; but he may calmly refer his case to God, who will not fail to vindicate His faithful servants. The mercy of God in Christ Jesus is all our confidence: and it should be our constant prayer that we may know and do His will. The wicked cast off the authority of God's

law : but let us esteem it above all earthly treasure, hate every false way, and in the way of "well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality."

PART 17. PE.

- 129 Thy testimonies are wonderful :
Therefore doth my soul keep them.
- 130 The entrance of Thy words giveth light ;
It giveth understanding unto the simple.
- 131 I opened my mouth, and panted :
For I longed for Thy commandments.
- 132 Look Thou upon me, and be merciful unto me,
As Thou usest to do unto those that love
Thy name.
- 133 Order my steps in Thy word :
And let not any iniquity have dominion over me.
- 134 Deliver me from the oppression of man :
So will I keep Thy precepts.
- 135 Make Thy face to shine upon Thy servant ;
And teach me Thy statutes.
- 136 Rivers of waters run down mine eyes,
Because they keep not Thy law.

REFLECTIONS.

God's word is wonderful in its holy and gracious discoveries ; in its spirit, laws, and promises. It is the light of our souls, and it should be our earnest prayer to be fully instructed in it. Pray we always for mercy, for freedom from the dominion of sin, for strength to lead obedient lives, and for the enjoyment of the divine favour. Let us mourn over the wicked who live in sin and folly, and strive to promote their best interests.

PART 18. TZADDI.

- 137 Righteous art Thou, O Lord,
And upright are Thy judgments.
138 Thy testimonies that Thou hast commanded
Are righteous and very faithful.
139 My zeal hath consumed me,
Because mine enemies have forgotten Thy words.
140 Thy word is very pure :
Therefore Thy servant loveth it.
141 I am small and despised :
Yet do not I forget Thy precepts.
142 Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness,
And Thy law is the truth.
143 Trouble and anguish have taken hold of me :
Yet Thy commandments are my delights.
144 The righteousness of Thy testimonies is everlasting :
Give me understanding, and I shall live.

REFLECTIONS.

God is holy and righteous; such also is His word: and as such it deserves our fervent love and constant remembrance. We may have enemies; we may be despised; we may have trouble and anguish: but if we pray for a spiritual understanding of God's word, we shall live; we shall have peace, satisfaction, and happiness in the way of truth and holiness, and we shall be blessed for ever through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

PART 19. KOPH.

DAY 26.] EVENING PRAYER.

- 145 I cried with my whole heart ; hear me, O Lord :
 I will keep Thy statutes.
- 146 I cried unto Thee ; save me,
 And I shall keep Thy testimonies.
- 147 I prevented the dawning of the morning, and
 cried :
 I hoped in Thy word.
- 148 Mine eyes prevent the night-watches,
 That I might meditate in Thy word.
- 149 Hear my voice according unto Thy lovingkind-
 ness :
 O Lord, quicken me according to Thy judgment.
- 150 They draw nigh that follow after mischief :
 They are far from Thy law.
- 151 Thou art near, O Lord ;
 And all Thy commandments are truth.
- 152 Concerning Thy testimonies, I have known of old
 That Thou hast founded them for ever.

REFLECTIONS.

If we would pray aright, we must pray with the whole heart: if we would resolve aright, we must resolve to keep God's commandments. The serious study of God's word is an important duty ; and we must pray that it may be to us the word of life, as well as of light. We need not regard the approach of enemies, if God be near us. If we trust in God's word, we trust in that which is unchanging and everlasting.

PART 20. RESH.

- 153 Consider mine affliction, and deliver me :
For I do not forget Thy law.
- 154 Plead my cause, and deliver me :
Quicken me according to Thy word.
- 155 Salvation is far from the wicked :
For they seek not Thy statutes.
- 156 Great are Thy tender mercies, O Lord :
Quicken me according to Thy judgments.
- 157 Many are my persecutors and mine enemies ;
Yet do I not decline from Thy testimonies.
- 158 I beheld the transgressors, and was grieved ;
Because they kept not Thy word.
- 159 Consider how I love Thy precepts :
Quicken me, O Lord,
according to Thy lovingkindness.
- 160 Thy word is true from the beginning :
And every one of Thy righteous judgments
endureth for ever.

REFLECTIONS.

Afflictions and enemies are to be expected here: and we must pray to God for comfort, deliverance, and enlivening grace: then we shall experience His tender mercies, and never decline from His ways. We may well be grieved for the wicked, far from salvation, and walking in an evil course. Be this our comfort,—the word of God is true and everlasting, and those who keep it are blessed now and for evermore.

PART 21. SCHIN.

- 161 Princes have persecuted me without a cause :
But my heart standeth in awe of Thy word.

- 162 I rejoice at Thy word,
As one that findeth great spoil.
163 I hate and abhor lying :
But Thy law do I love.
164 Seven times a day do I praise Thee,
Because of Thy righteous judgments.
165 Great peace have they which love Thy law :
And nothing shall offend them.
166 Lord, I have hoped for Thy salvation,
And done Thy commandments.
167 My soul hath kept Thy testimonies;
And I love them exceedingly.
168 I have kept Thy precepts and Thy testimonies :
For all my ways are before Thee.

REFLECTIONS.

To stand in awe of God's word, to account it our invaluable treasure, and to love it as the truth ; this is the way to be happy. Then indeed we shall praise God, and have great peace. If we hope for salvation through faith in Christ, and do God's commandments, ordering our conversation as those who are always in God's sight, we have the greatest reason to rejoice ; and this is the excellence which we ought to seek, and in which we ought to abound.

PART 22. TAU.

- 169 Let my prayer come near before Thee, O Lord ;
Give me understanding according to Thy word.
170 Let my supplication come before Thee :
Deliver me according to Thy word.
171 My lips shall utter praise,

- When Thou hast taught me Thy statutes.
 172 My tongue shall speak of Thy word :
 For all Thy commandments are righteousness.
 173 Let Thy hand help me ;
 For I have chosen Thy precepts.
 174 I have longed for Thy salvation, O Lord ;
 And Thy law is my delight.
 175 Let my soul live, and it shall praise Thee ;
 And let Thy judgments help me.
 176 I have gone astray like a lost sheep ;
 Seek Thy servant ;
 For I do not forget Thy commandments.

REFLECTIONS.

We must pray for understanding and for deliverance ; and when we are taught of God, and are freed from our enemies, we shall abound in praise. Help, salvation, and spiritual life are God's gifts. Happy are we, if we delight in His law, if we seek these blessings, and never forget His commandments. We oft indeed go astray : how needful, then, the petition that our gracious Shepherd would restore our souls !
 Psalm xxiii. 3.

PSALM CXX.

DAY 27.]

MORNING PRAYER.

Prayer, as Psalm iv. Some ascribe it to David : others think that it was written after the captivity.

(I. *Prayer in trouble.*)

- 1 In my distress I cried unto the Lord,
 And He heard me.

- 2 Deliver my soul, O Lord, from lying lips,
And from a deceitful tongue.
- 3 What shall be given unto thee?
Or what shall be done unto thee, thou false tongue?
- 4 Sharp arrows of the mighty,
With coals of juniper.
- 5 Woe is me, that I sojourn in Mesech,
That I dwell in the tents of Kedar!
- 6 My soul hath long dwelt with him that hateth
peace.
- 7 I am for peace:
But when I speak, they are for war.

REFLECTIONS.

Falsehood, deceit, and strife—such are some of the evils which may compel us to say at times, Woe is me! Our comfort is, that God will hear our prayers, preserve, comfort, and deliver us. But the wicked will do well to remember, that, however they persecute and grieve the pious for a season, the awful judgments of God will fall upon them.

PRAYER.

Whatever we may suffer from the ungodly, help us, O Lord, to be patient in well doing, and to call upon Thee; knowing that Thou wilt preserve, deliver, and bless us. In the cultivation of peace and holiness, may we glorify Thee, till we change the tents of earth for the mansions of peace and glory above. Amen.

PSALM CXXI.

Instructive, as Psalm i.

(Happiness of the godly.)

- 1 I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills,
From whence cometh my help.
- 2 My help cometh from the Lord,
Which made heaven and earth.
- 3 He will not suffer thy foot to be moved :
He that keepeth thee will not slumber.
- 4 Behold, He that keepeth Israel
Shall neither slumber nor sleep.
- 5 The Lord is thy keeper :
The Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand.
- 6 The sun shall not smite thee by day,
Nor the moon by night.
- 7 The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil :
He shall preserve thy soul.
- 8 The Lord shall preserve thy going out
and thy coming in
From this time forth, and even for evermore.

REFLECTIONS.

In all our troubles, at all times, and in all places, we should remember that God is our Helper, and look up and pray to Him. A godly man has no cause for fear : the unslumbering eye of God is always upon him for good. Neither the powers of earth nor of hell shall hurt him. All his goings shall be established : he shall walk in the path of righteousness, and his soul shall be preserved unto everlasting life.

PRAYER.

Grant, O Lord, that, amidst the dangers of this sinful world, we may always be safe in Thy protection. Watch over us, we beseech Thee, and preserve us in our going out and coming in. To Thee may we always look for help, and praise Thee for Thy goodness to us, through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

PSALM CXXII.

Prayer of Intercession, as Psalm xx. A song of David.

(I. *Joy for divine ordinances.*)

- 1 I was glad when they said unto me,
Let us go into the house of the Lord.
- 2 Our feet shall stand
Within thy gates, O Jerusalem.

(II. *Internal government of the Church.*)

- 3 Jerusalem is builded as a city
That is compact together :
- 4 Whither the tribes go up,
The tribes of the Lord,
Unto the testimony of Israel,
To give thanks unto the Name of the Lord.
- 5 For there are set thrones of judgment,
The thrones of the house of David.

(III. *Prayer for peace.*)

- 6 Pray for the peace of Jerusalem :
They shall prosper that love thee.
- 7 Peace be within thy walls,

And prosperity within thy palaces.

8 For my brethren and companions' sakes,
I will now say, Peace be within thee.

9 Because of the house of the Lord our God
I will seek thy good.

REFLECTIONS.

1. The public ordinances of religion are inestimable blessings. The proper resolve is, always to attend them: and the right feeling when we attend them is, joy and gladness.

2. Happy is the nation, happy is the Church, in which we see unity and concord. All division and confusion are the fruits of sin, and the springs of misery. When we worship, we should thank God for all blessings, spiritual and temporal; for the blessings of the Church, and for those of civil government.

3. Thus we all ought to pray; to pray for the prosperity of our land, that peace and happiness may abound in it. Our country should be dear to us, as the land of our brethren and companions, and especially as the land of true religion.

PRAYER.

Give us, O Lord, a due sense of all our blessings, religious and civil, in this favoured land: and be Thou merciful unto us, and grant that faith and love, unity and concord, may abound and prevail among us, with all the fruits of righteousness, to Thy honour and glory, through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

PSALM CXXIII.

Prayer, as Psalm xliv. David might have written this Psalm during the rebellion of Absalom: but it is probably the complaint of the captives in Babylon.

(I. *Confidence in God.*)

- 1 Unto Thee lift I up mine eyes,
O Thou that dwellest in the heavens.
- 2 Behold, as the eyes of servants
look unto the hand of their masters,
And as the eyes of a maiden
unto the hand of her mistress;
So our eyes wait upon the Lord our God,
Until that He have mercy upon us.

(II. *Prayer.*)

- 3 Have mercy upon us, O Lord, have mercy upon us:
For we are exceedingly filled with contempt.
- 4 Our soul is exceedingly filled
With the scorning of those that are at ease,
And with the contempt of the proud.

REFLECTIONS.

1. Here we see faith and patience; faith looking up to God; and patience meekly waiting for the divine mercy. This is at all times, and especially in times of trouble, the frame of mind that becomes us.

2. The proud may treat us with contempt; and this we may keenly feel: but, instead of railing at them, we should implore the divine mercy and favour; that we may be comforted under, and delivered from, all our troubles.

PRAYER.

To Thee, O Lord, may we always look up in faith, and on Thee may we wait with patience. Whatever be the perverseness of man, be Thou merciful to us, and succour and comfort us, that we may rejoice in Thee, through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

PSALM CXXIV.

Thanksgiving, as Psalm xli. A song of degrees of David.

(I. *Thanksgiving for deliverance.*)

- 1 If it had not been the Lord who was on our side,
Now may Israel say ;
- 2 If it had not been the Lord who was on our side,
When men rose up against us :
- 3 Then they had swallowed us up quick,
When their wrath was kindled against us :
- 4 Then the waters had overwhelmed us,
The stream had gone over our soul :
- 5 Then the proud waters had gone over our soul.
- 6 Blessed be the Lord,
Who hath not given us as a prey to their teeth.
- 7 Our soul is escaped as a bird
out of the snare of the fowlers :
The snare is broken, and we are escaped.
- 8 Our help is in the Name of the Lord,
Who made heaven and earth.

REFLECTIONS.

If we look back upon the history of the Church ; if
recall to mind our own history ; with this Psalm

before us, we shall have three subjects for our consideration: the wrath of enemies and the waves of trouble; the goodness of God; and the thanks and praise that we owe to Him, who has been, is, and always will be, the helper and deliverer of those who trust in Him.

PRAYER.

Merciful and gracious God, may we, and Thy whole Church, always bless and magnify Thy goodness. Deliver us from all our enemies; and in all our dangers and troubles be Thou our almighty defender and deliverer, to the glory of Thy Name, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

PSALM CXXV.

Instructive, as Psalm i.

(I. Safety of those who trust in God.)

- 1 They that trust in the Lord shall be as mount Zion,
Which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever.
- 2 As the mountains are round about Jerusalem,
So the Lord is round about His people
From henceforth even for ever.

(II. Prayer.)

- 3 For the rod of the wicked
Shall not rest upon the lot of the righteous;
Lest the righteous put forth
their hands unto iniquity.
- 4 Do good, O Lord, unto those that be good,
And to them that are upright in their hearts.
- 5 As for such as turn aside unto their crooked ways,

The Lord shall lead them forth
with the workers of iniquity :
But peace shall be upon Israel.

REFLECTIONS.

1. The image by which the safety of the good, through the divine protection, is here represented, is plain to every reader. The lesson which we are here taught is, that if we trust in God, and call upon Him, we shall be secure amidst the assaults of our enemies.

2. We have here encouragement: God may try His people by the power and malice of the wicked for a season; but the wicked shall not always be pre-eminent, lest the good, wearied and exhausted by oppression and cruelty, should plunge into sin. We have here also a prayer for the good, and a declaration of the different ends of the wicked and the righteous. If we be truly good and upright in heart, then the Lord will do us good; He will preserve and bless us, and we shall enjoy peace. But the workers of iniquity, however they may rule for a time, will be visited with punishment according to their evil doings.

PRAYER.

Grant, O Lord, that we may be always safe in Thy protection. Whatever be the power of the wicked, keep us from all sin, do us good, and grant us the peace and happiness of Thine Israel; for the sake of Jesus Christ. Amen.

PSALM CXXVI.

DAY 27.] EVENING PRAYER.

Thanksgiving, as Psalm xli. Probably written after the captivity.

(I. *Return from captivity.*)

- 1 When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion,
We were like them that dream.
- 2 Then was our mouth filled with laughter,
And our tongue with singing:
Then said they among the heathen,
“The Lord hath done great things for them.”
- 3 The Lord hath done great things for us;
Whereof we are glad.

(II. *Prayer: Prediction of success.*)

- 4 Turn again our captivity, O Lord,
As the streams in the south.
- 5 They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.
- 6 He that goeth forth and weepeth,
bearing precious seed,
Shall doubtless come again with rejoicing,
bringing his sheaves with him.

REFLECTIONS.

1. The return from the Babylonish captivity was matter of great joy to the devout Jews. Are we freed from the captivity of sin? Then we may say, “The Lord hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad.”

2. If our fetters are broken, we shall pray that others may share the like mercy, and flow into the

Church in great abundance. Life is the seed-time. We may sow in tears: but if we sow to the spirit, we shall of the spirit reap in joy the blessings of everlasting life.

PRAYER.

Deliver us, O Lord, and deliver all mankind, from the captivity of sin: and may we in patience sow good and precious seed, that we may reap above, with rejoicing souls, the harvest of eternal bliss, through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

PSALM CXXVII.

Instructive, as Psalm i.

(I. *The virtue of God's blessing.*)

- 1 Except the Lord build the house,
They labour in vain that build it:
Except the Lord keep the city,
The watchman waketh but in vain.
- 2 It is vain for you to rise up early,
To sit up late,
To eat the bread of sorrows:
For so He giveth His beloved sleep.

(II. *Children are His gift.*)

- 3 Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord:
And the fruit of the womb is His reward.
- 4 As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man;
So are children of the youth.
- 5 Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them:

They shall not be ashamed,
But they shall speak with the enemies in the gate.

REFLECTIONS.

1. We must build, and watch, and labour: it is our duty to exert ourselves, both in the temporal and spiritual life: but in all things we must remember our entire dependence upon God, and that success, safety, and prosperity are from Him. He gives quiet sleep to those who confide in Him.

2. Children are the gift of God; and we should strive and pray to bring them up in "the nurture and admonition of the Lord;" that, through His mercy and goodness, they may be a source of happiness to us, ornaments in the Church, and valuable members of society.

PRAYER.

In all our works, O Lord, may we look to Thee, depend upon Thee, and enjoy the peace and safety of those who believe in Thee: and may Thy blessing rest upon our children, that they may glorify Thee. Grant this, we beseech Thee, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

PSALM CXXVIII.

Instructive, as Psalm i. It may be viewed as a continuation of the preceding Psalm.

(I. *Blessings which follow them that fear God.*)

1 Blessed is every one that feareth the Lord;
That walketh in His ways.

- 2 For thou shalt eat the labour of thy hands :
Happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee.
- 3 Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine
by the sides of thy house :
Thy children like olive-plants round about thy
table.
- 4 Behold, that thus shall the man be blessed
That feareth the Lord.
- 5 The Lord shall bless thee out of Zion :
And thou shalt see the good of Jerusalem
All the days of thy life.
- 6 Yea, thou shalt see thy children's children,
And peace upon Israel.

REFLECTIONS.

Here we see, 1. The principle of the good man : he fears the Lord ; he knows and reveres God. 2. The life or conduct of the good man : he walks in God's ways : he is regularly obedient to His laws. He renounces his own ways, and the ways of an ungodly world ; and proceeds in that course of action which the word of God reveals and enjoins. 3. The happy state, the blessedness of the good man. God prospers him in his labour ; in his family ; in his soul ; in national blessings ; and in his posterity. Thus "godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come."

PRAYER.

Plant in our hearts, O Lord, the fear of Thy holy Name : enable us to renounce every evil way, and to walk in Thy ways : and grant that we, through Thy

mercy and goodness, may experience that blessedness, here and for ever, which is the portion of Thy faithful servants, through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

PSALM CXXIX.

Thanksgiving, as Psalm xlii. Probably written after the captivity.

(I. *The Church's troubles and deliverances.*)

- 1 Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth,
May Israel now say :
- 2 Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth :
Yet they have not prevailed against me.
- 3 The plowers plowed upon my back :
They made long their furrows.
- 4 The Lord is righteous :
He hath cut asunder the cords of the wicked.

(II. *The end of those who hate her.*)

- 5 Let them all be confounded and turned back
That hate Zion.
- 6 Let them be as the grass upon the house-tops,
Which withereth afore it groweth up :
- 7 Wherewith the mower filleth not his hand ;
Nor he that bindeth sheaves his bosom.
- 8 Neither do they which go by say,
The blessing of the Lord be upon you :
We bless you in the Name of the Lord.

REFLECTIONS.

1. We may apply this to the Israelites, to Christ, to the Church, and to every faithful Christian. The

righteous have many enemies; they have many trials and afflictions; but they can say that God is righteous, and they can speak of deliverance.

2. How awful is the end of the ungodly! The haters of God's Church will in due time be covered with confusion: their glory will soon fade, and they themselves vanish away. Who blesses them in their life? Who laments at their death?

PRAYER.

In all our afflictions, O Lord, be Thou our supporter and comforter. May we acknowledge Thy righteousness, and experience Thy deliverance. May the wicked consider the end of a sinful course of life, and, through Thy grace, renounce all error and iniquity. Mercifully grant our petitions for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

PSALM CXXX.'

Penitential.

(I. *Prayer.*)

- 1 Out of the depths have I cried unto Thee, O Lord.
- 2 Lord, hear my voice:
Let Thine ears be attentive
to the voice of my supplications.

(II. *Confession.*)

- 3 If Thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities,
O Lord, who shall stand?

(III. Faith in the divine mercy.)

- 4 But there is forgiveness with Thee,
That Thou mayest be feared.
5 I wait for the Lord; my soul doth wait,
And in His word do I hope.
6 My soul waiteth for the Lord
More than they that watch for the morning:
I say, more than they that watch for the morning.

(IV. Exhortation to trust in God.)

- 7 Let Israel hope in the Lord :
For with the Lord there is mercy,
And with Him is plenteous redemption.
8 And He shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities.

REFLECTIONS.

1. In the depths of spiritual and temporal trouble, we must present our earnest prayers to our God and Saviour.

2. A true penitent knows his sins and guilt : he sees and feels that he cannot stand before God, and be justified.

3. Faith looks to the mercy of God in Christ Jesus ; looks to the forgiveness of sin ; and waits for peace and consolation with eager and intense desire.

4. Those who thus pray, confess, and believe, will soon be able to encourage others, and to speak with gratitude and confidence of the redemption which the Gospel reveals and offers to us.

PRAYER.

In all our troubles, O Lord, enable us to pray to Thee, and do Thou graciously receive our prayer :

may we approach Thee with humility, confessing our sins; and with faith, trusting in Thy mercy in Christ Jesus. On Thee may we wait, and experience Thy goodness, and be able to speak to others of Thy mercy and redeeming love. Amen.

PSALM CXXXI.

Instructive. A Song of David. Humility.

(I. *Profession of Humility.*)

- 1 Lord, my heart is not haughty,
Nor mine eyes lofty :
Neither do I exercise myself in great matters,
Or in things too high for me.
- 2 Surely I have behaved and quieted myself,
As a child that is weaned of his mother :
My soul is even as a weaned child.

(II. *Exhortation to hope.*)

- 3 Let Israel hope in the Lord
From henceforth and for ever.

REFLECTIONS.

Nothing is more injurious than pride; nothing is more beneficial than humility. Pride is destruction; humility is salvation. Pray we, then, for a meek and humble spirit. Meddle we not with high things, which do not concern us. Be we quiet, peaceable, and dependent upon God, looking to Him and hoping in Him.

PRAYER.

Deliver us, O Lord, from pride and haughtiness, and fill us with humility and meekness: deliver us also

from distrust and unbelief, and may we hope in Thee at all times according to the Gospel of Thy Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PSALM CXXXII.

DAY 28.]

MORNING PRAYER.

Prayer of Intercession, as Psalm xx.

(I. *Zeal for the Ark.*)

- 1 Lord, remember David,
And all his afflictions :
- 2 How he sware unto the Lord,
And vowed unto the mighty God of Jacob :
- 3 Surely I will not come into the tabernacle of my
house,
Nor go up into my bed ;
- 4 I will not give sleep to mine eyes,
Or slumber to mine eyelids,
- 5 Until I find out a place for the Lord,
A habitation for the mighty God of Jacob.

(II. *Exultation and resolve.*)

- 6 Lo, we heard of it at Ephratah :
We found it in the fields of the wood.
- 7 We will go into his tabernacles :
We will worship at His footstool.

(III. *Prayer.*)

- 8 Arise, O Lord, into Thy rest ;
Thou, and the ark of Thy strength.
- 9 Let Thy priests be clothed with righteousness ;

- And let Thy saints shout for joy.
10 For Thy servant David's sake
Turn not away the face of Thine anointed.
- (IV. *God's mercies to David and to his posterity.*)
- 11 The Lord hath sworn in truth unto David ;
He will not turn from it ;
Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne.
- 12 If thy children will keep my covenant
And my testimony that I shall teach them,
Their children also shall sit upon thy throne for evermore.
- 13 For the Lord hath chosen Zion ;
He hath desired it for His habitation.
- 14 This is my rest for ever : here will I dwell ;
For I have desired it.
- 15 I will abundantly bless her provision :
I will satisfy her poor with bread.
- 16 I will also clothe her priests with salvation :
And her saints shall shout aloud for joy.
- 17 There will I make the horn of David to bud :
I have ordained a lamp for mine anointed.
- 18 His enemies will I clothe with shame :
But upon himself shall his crown flourish.

REFLECTIONS.

1. Imitate David, and attend to the interests of religion. We must not only be worshippers of God ourselves, but make provision also for others, that they may be worshippers of Him. Did Christians attend to religion as they ought, how thickly would Churches be strown over our land ! Alas ! how alive are many

to their own comfort and accommodation, while the habitation for the mighty God of Jacob is forgotten !

2. If we look to Bethlehem Ephratah, we there behold the blessed Jesus. Oh that we may worship before Him with reverence, humility, and joy !

3. We ought to pray for the prosperity of the Church ; that her ministers may be holy and righteous ; that her children may be joyful in piety ; and that the prayers offered up in her may be heard.

4. The Lord Jesus Christ is King in Zion : He fills the mediatorial throne. His people must keep the covenant ; must believe, obey, and persevere as the Gospel requires. Then the prosperity of the Church will be great. The divine presence will be in her ; her children shall be fed with the bread of life ; both ministers and people shall rejoice in the blessings of salvation ; she shall flourish from age to age ; and confusion and shame shall be the portion of her adversaries.

PRAYER.

Inspire us with zeal, O Lord, in promoting true religion ; and may we be worshippers of Thee according to Thy Gospel. Teach us earnestly to pray for the prosperity of Thy Church ; and mercifully grant that we may see that prosperity in the faithfulness of her ministers, and the happiness of her children, to the glory of Thy Name, through our only Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

PSALM CXXXIII.

Instructive, as Psalm i. A Song of David.

(1. *The benefit of the communion of saints.*)

- 1 Behold, how good and how pleasant it is
For brethren to dwell together in unity!
- 2 It is like the precious ointment upon the head,
That ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's
beard :
That went down to the skirts of his garments ;
- 3 As the dew of Hermon,
And as the dew that descended upon the mountains
of Zion :
For there the Lord commanded the blessing,
Even life for evermore.

REFLECTIONS.

The spirit of true religion is a spirit of love, concord, and unity. Where this spirit exists, the graces and virtues of piety diffuse their fragrance, and Christians flourish as plants watered with the dew of heaven. They enjoy all spiritual blessings; even life for evermore.

PRAYER.

O Thou who art the God of peace and love, pour down, we beseech Thee, the spirit of true religion, the spirit of love, concord, and unity, on our hearts, on our families, on the Church of Christ, and on the whole world. Hasten the coming of that day when all men shall be of one mind, one in faith, and one in love. Amen.

PSALM CXXXIV.

Displaying the divine perfections, as Psalm viii.

(Exhortation to bless God.)

- 1 Behold, bless ye the Lord,
All ye servants of the Lord,
Which by night stand in the house of the Lord.
- 2 Lift up your hands in the sanctuary,
And bless the Lord.
- 3 The Lord that made heaven and earth
Bless thee out of Zion.

REFLECTIONS.

In the duty here enjoined on the priests and Levites who kept nightly watch in the temple, we see what our duty is. In the house of the Lord all of us, ministers and people, should worship God in the beauty of holiness, and bless His name; bless Him, our Maker, Redeemer, and Sanctifier, for all His goodness to us. There, too, we should pray, that He who is King in Zion may pour forth His blessings on ministers and people in all lands.

PRAYER.

Enable us, O Lord, to offer unto Thee holy worship; to bless Thee for all Thy mercy and goodness; and to pray unto Thee for blessings on ourselves and on all Thy Church; through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

PSALM CXXXV.

Thanksgiving, as Psalm xli. Probably written after the captivity.

(I. *God to be praised for His mercy.*)

- 1 Praise ye the Lord.
Praise ye the Name of the Lord;
Praise Him, O ye servants of the Lord.
- 2 Ye that stand in the house of the Lord,
In the courts of the house of our God.
- 3 Praise the Lord; for the Lord is good:
Sing praises unto His Name; for it is pleasant.
- 4 For the Lord hath chosen Jacob unto Himself,
And Israel for His peculiar treasure.

(II. *For His power.*)

- 5 For I know that the Lord is great,
And that our Lord is above all gods.
- 6 Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did He
In heaven, and in earth, in the seas,
and in all deep places.
- 7 He causeth the vapours to ascend
from the ends of the earth;
He maketh lightnings for the rain;
He bringeth the wind out of His treasures.

(III. *For His judgments.*)

- 8 Who smote the first-born of Egypt,
Both of man and beast.
- 9 Who sent tokens and wonders into the midst of
thee, O Egypt,
Upon Pharaoh, and upon all his servants.

- 10 Who smote great nations,
And slew mighty kings;
11 Sihon king of the Amorites,
And Og king of Bashan,
And all the kingdoms of Canaan :
12 And gave their land for a heritage,
A heritage unto Israel His people.
13 Thy name, O Lord, endureth for ever ;
And Thy memorial, O Lord,
throughout all generations.
14 For the Lord will judge His people,
And He will repent Himself concerning His servants.

(IV. *The vanity of Idols.*)

- 15 The idols of the heathen are silver and gold,
The work of men's hands.
16 They have mouths, but they speak not ;
Eyes have they, but they see not ;
17 They have ears, but they hear not ;
Neither is there any breath in their mouths.
18 They that make them are like unto them :
So is every one that trusteth in them.

(V. *Praise.*)

- 19 Bless the Lord, O house of Israel :
Bless the Lord, O house of Aaron :
20 Bless the Lord, O house of Levi :
Ye that fear the Lord, bless the Lord.
21 Blessed be the Lord out of Zion,
Which dwelleth at Jerusalem.
Praise ye the Lord.

REFLECTIONS.

1. We see our duty : to praise the Lord in His house ; to sing praises unto His Name. We see reasons for performing it : the Lord is good ; the work itself is pleasant ; and we are God's chosen people.

2. We have here further reasons for praise : God is great, the Maker and Ruler of all things, whose might and majesty shine forth in all His works.

3. The same subject is continued : God is to be praised for His wonderful and gracious dealings with His Church. He destroyed or subdued its enemies ; and has given it prosperity, or comforted it in its distress. And He is through all ages the same righteous and gracious God, maintaining His own cause in an evil world.

4. What a melancholy proof do we see in idolatry of the corrupting and debasing power of sin ; blinding the understanding and utterly overturning reason ; so that we can only compare the idolater to his idol ; both of them blind and dead.

5. Oh with what joy and gratitude should we all, as Christians, consider our blessings ! Jehovah is our God : let ministers and people alike unite to bless Him ; to declare His goodness and celebrate His praise.

PRAYER.

O great and glorious God, we know Thee in Thy works and counsels : Thou art God, and none else ; fill our souls with deep reverence for Thee ; and whilst we think of Thy glory and greatness, of Thy

goodness and mercy, may we bless Thee and live as Thy faithful servants, to Thy honour and praise, through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

PSALM CXXXVI.

DAY 28.]

EVENING PRAYER.

Thanksgiving, as Psalm xlviii. Very similar to the preceding Psalm.

(I. *Praise.*)

- 1 O give thanks unto the Lord ; for He is good :
For His mercy endureth for ever.
- 2 O give thanks unto the God of gods :
For His mercy endureth for ever.
- 3 O give thanks unto the Lord of lords :
For His mercy endureth for ever.

(II. *For Creation.*)

- 4 To Him who alone doeth great wonders :
For His mercy endureth for ever.
- 5 To Him that by wisdom made the heavens :
For His mercy endureth for ever.
- 6 To Him that stretched out the earth above the
waters :
For His mercy endureth for ever.
- 7 To Him that made great lights :
For His mercy endureth for ever :
- 8 The sun to rule by day :
For His mercy endureth for ever :
- 9 The moon and stars to rule by night :
For His mercy endureth for ever.

(III. For God's providence and grace.)

- 10 To Him that smote Egypt in their first-born :
For His mercy endureth for ever :
- 11 And brought out Israel from among them :
For His mercy endureth for ever :
- 12 With a strong hand, and a stretched-out arm :
For His mercy endureth for ever.
- 13 To Him which divided the Red Sea :
For His mercy endureth for ever :
- 14 And made Israel to pass through the midst of it :
For His mercy endureth for ever :
- 15 But overthrew Pharaoh and his host in the Red
Sea :
For His mercy endureth for ever.
- 16 To Him which led His people through the wil-
derness :
For His mercy endureth for ever.
- 17 To Him which smote great kings :
For His mercy endureth for ever :
- 18 And slew famous kings :
For His mercy endureth for ever :
- 19 Sihon king of the Amorites :
For His mercy endureth for ever :
- 20 And Og the king of Bashan :
For His mercy endureth for ever :
- 21 And gave their land for a heritage :
For His mercy endureth for ever :
- 22 Even a heritage unto Israel his servant :
For His mercy endureth for ever.
- 23 Who remembered us in our low estate :
For His mercy endureth for ever :

24 And hath redeemed us from our enemies :

For His mercy endureth for ever.

25 Who giveth food to all flesh :

For His mercy endureth for ever :

(IV. *Praise.*)

26 O give thanks unto the God of heaven :

For His mercy endureth for ever.

REFLECTIONS.

1. God is good : King of kings and Lord of lords ; and His mercy endureth for ever. What less, then, can we do than magnify Him with thanksgiving ?

2. God is great in His works : His wonders in creation, in the sky above us, in the earth and waters around us, and in the luminaries of day and night, bespeak the power and wisdom of Him whose mercy endureth for ever.

3. God is wonderful in His dealings with His Church. With what joy and gratitude could the devout Israelite review the history of his nation ; God's wonderful works in Egypt, at the Red Sea, in the wilderness, and in Canaan ; and celebrate His power, goodness, and mercy ! We have the same subjects to contemplate, and subjects also of a still higher order. With what peculiar earnestness can the Christian Church, and every faithful member of it, repeat the concluding verses of this Psalm ?

4. All thanks, all praise, be ascribed to Him who is supreme and omnipotent, good and gracious ; and whose mercy is everlasting.

PRAYER.

Help us, O Lord, to meditate on Thy works and ways with devout and thankful hearts. May we trust in Thy mercy, keep ourselves in the love of Thee, and look for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, unto eternal life. Amen.

PSALM CXXXVII.

Prayer, as Psalm xliv. Written after the Captivity.

(I. *The sorrow of Israel at Babylon.*)

- 1 By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down,
Yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion.
- 2 We hanged our harps
Upon the willows in the midst thereof.

(II. *Insolence of their masters.*)

- 3 For there they that carried us away captive
Required of us a song;
And they that wasted us
Required of us mirth,
Saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion.
- 4 How shall we sing the Lord's song
In a strange land?

(III. *Their affliction for Jerusalem.*)

- 5 If I forget thee, O Jerusalem,
Let my right hand forget her cunning.
- 6 If I do not remember thee,
Let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth;
If I prefer not Jerusalem
Above my chief joy.

(IV. Destruction of their enemies foretold.)

- 7 Remember, O Lord, the children of Edom
 In the day of Jerusalem ;
 Who said, Rase it, rase it,
 Even to the foundation thereof.
- 8 O daughter of Babylon, who art to be destroyed ;
 Happy shall he be, that rewardeth thee
 As thou hast served us.
- 9 Happy shall he be that taketh
 And dasheth thy little ones against the stones.

REFLECTIONS.

1. In one point of view this world is a Babylon to us ; a land of captivity. Yet we are God's people, and should remember the heavenly Zion. Our harps are here often suspended on the willows. This is a land of tears.

2. The ungodly see not, and feel not, as we do. They may wonder at our sorrow and heaviness, and require of us songs and mirth. But songs are not always for heavy hearts. There are seasons in which we cannot sing even the Lord's song.

3. Never can we forget the Church : her sorrow is our sorrow, and her joy is our joy. For her we wake our harps. Whatever be our joy on earth, we prefer the spiritual Jerusalem far above it.

4. However the Church may suffer, a day of wrath will come, and bring an awful desolation upon the enemies of Zion. Think, ye deriders and persecutors ! and avert your ruin by timely repentance ; by becoming the children of her whom ye seek to destroy.

PRAYER.

Defend, O Lord, and bless Thy Church : and may we, and all her faithful children always remember her and consult her welfare ; and may we, pilgrims and sojourners in a strange land, sing Thy songs and praise Thy Name for ever and ever ; through Jesus Christ. Amen.

PSALM CXXXVIII.

Thanksgiving, as Psalm xviii. A Psalm of David.

(I. *Resolution to praise God.*)

- 1 I will praise Thee with my whole heart:
Before the gods will I sing praise unto Thee.
- 2 I will worship toward Thy holy temple,
And praise Thy Name for Thy lovingkindness and
for Thy truth :
For Thou hast magnified Thy word above all Thy
Name.
- 3 In the day when I cried Thou answeredst me,
And strengthenedst me with strength in my soul.

(II. *Prediction that kings shall glorify Him.*)

- 4 All the kings of the earth shall praise Thee,
O Lord,
When they hear the words of Thy mouth.
- 5 Yea, they shall sing in the ways of the Lord:
For great is the glory of the Lord.

(III. *Of the humble and the proud.*)

6 Though the Lord be high, yet he hath respect
unto the lowly :

But the proud He knoweth afar off.

(IV. *Confidence in God.*)

7 Though I walk in the midst of trouble, Thou wilt
revive me :

Thou shalt stretch forth Thy hand against the
wrath of mine enemies,

And Thy right hand shall save me.

8 The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me :
Thy mercy, O Lord, endureth for ever :

Forsake not the work of Thine own hands.

REFLECTIONS.

1. It is our duty to worship and praise God, who is merciful and great, faithful to His word, and the giver of strength and comfort.

2. We anticipate with confidence and joy the time when the mighty of this world shall praise God, and acknowledge His glory. 3. How delightful is the thought, that the great and glorious God regards the humble. The proud are only known by Him to be abhorred and rejected. 4. Here is faith. The believing soul is assured of the divine goodness and mercy ; pours out its prayer ; and calmly reposes on God.

PRAYER.

Help us, O Lord, to praise and magnify Thee for Thy lovingkindness and truth ; and hasten the time when the high and low of all nations shall sing in Thy

ways, and celebrate Thy great glory. Make us to be truly humble, and may we rejoice in Thy favour. Whatever our troubles may be, help us to trust in Thee with sure confidence. Forsake us not; but perfect that which Thou hast begun in us; for the sake of Thy Son Jesus Christ. Amen.

PSALM CXXXIX.

DAY 29.]

MORNING PRAYER.

Displaying the divine perfections, as Psalm viii. A Psalm of David.

(I. *God's Omniscience.*)

- 1 O Lord, Thou hast searched me and known me.
- 2 Thou knowest my downsitting, and mine uprising,
Thou understandest my thought afar off.
- 3 Thou compassest my path and my lying down,
And art acquainted with all my ways.
- 4 For there is not a word in my tongue,
But, lo, O Lord, Thou knowest it altogether.
- 5 Thou hast beset me behind and before,
And laid Thy hand upon me.
- 6 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me;
It is high, I cannot attain unto it.

(II. *His Omnipresence.*)

- 7 Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit?
Or whither shall I flee from Thy presence?
- 8 If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there:
If I make my bed in hell, behold, Thou art there:
- 9 If I take the wings of the morning,

- And dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea;
10 Even there shall Thy hand lead me,
And Thy right hand shall hold me.
11 If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me;
Even the night shall be light about me.
12 Yea, the darkness hideth not from Thee;
But the night shineth as the day:
The darkness and the light are both alike to Thee.

(III. *The formation of Man.*)

- 13 For Thou hast possessed my reins :
Thou hast covered me in my mother's womb.
14 I will praise Thee ;
For I am fearfully and wonderfully made :
Marvellous are Thy works ;
And that my soul knoweth right well.
15 My substance was not hid from Thee,
When I was made in secret,
And curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the
earth.
16 Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being
unperfect ;
And in Thy book all my members were written,
Which in continuance were fashioned,
When as yet there was none of them.

(IV. *Excellence of God's purposes.*)

- 17 How precious also are Thy thoughts unto me,
O God !
How great is the sum of them !
18 If I should count them,
They are more in number than the sand :
When I awake, I am still with Thee.

(V. Ruin of the wicked: separation from them.)

- 19 Surely Thou wilt slay the wicked, O God :
Depart from me, therefore, ye bloody men.
20 For they speak against Thee wickedly,
And Thine enemies take Thy name in vain.
21 Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate Thee ?
And am not I grieved with those
that rise up against Thee ?
22 I hate them with perfect hatred :
I count them mine enemies.

(VI. Prayer.)

- 23 Search me, O God, and know my heart :
Try me, and know my thoughts :
24 And see if there be any wicked way in me,
And lead me in the way everlasting.

REFLECTIONS.

1. What a striking statement of the knowledge of God ! He knows all things ; He knows the heart of man. Our actions, our words, and our thoughts are alike open before Him. We may conceal much from man ; but we can conceal nothing from God. How careful ought we to be to order our whole conversation as creatures who belong to Him who is infinite in knowledge !

2. How awfully does the Psalmist here declare the presence of God everywhere ! Wherever we are, by day and by night, God is with us. We cannot go where He is not. In all places, in all circumstances, we may say, "Thou seest me ; Thou art with me."

What a source of consolation ! What a motive to circumspection !

3. Here we meditate upon the wonderful formation of the human body. Before we were born into the world we were open to the eye of God, and fashioned by His skill and power. Oh how can we employ our members in the service of sin ! We should dedicate them to the service of Him who made them.

4. God's care of us is here to be considered. His thoughts, His counsels respecting us, both in providence and in grace, are delightful subjects for our meditation. How precious ! How numberless ! Happy is he who, when he awakes, awakes with thoughts of God.

5. Here we may notice separation from the wicked. If we love God we shall hate sin, lament the perverseness of careless sinners, and keep at a distance from their evil ways.

6. Here learn the nature of unfeigned sincerity. The true Christian desires to be approved of God in heart and conduct ; he desires to discover every thing sinful within him, that he may "perfect holiness in the fear of God."

PRAYER.

Give us, O Lord, a due sense of Thy knowledge and of Thy presence. May we "present our bodies a living sacrifice unto Thee." May we meditate on Thy thoughts towards us ; keep far from the workers of evil ; and in heart and conduct be unblameable in Thy sight, through our blessed and only Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

PSALM CXL.

Prayer, as Psalm iv. Written by David, probably, when persecuted by Saul, or by Absalom.

(I. *Prayer for deliverance and preservation.*)

- 1 Deliver me, O Lord, from the evil man :
Preserve me from the violent man ;
- 2 Which imagine mischiefs in their heart ;
Continually are they gathered together for war.
- 3 They have sharpened their tongues like a serpent ;
Adders' poison is under their lips.
- 4 Keep me, O Lord, from the hands of the wicked ;
Preserve me from the violent man ;
Who have purposed to overthrow my goings.

(II. *Faith and prayer amidst danger.*)

- 5 The proud have hid a snare for me, and cords ;
They have spread a net by the wayside ;
They have set gins for me.
- 6 I said unto the Lord, Thou art my God ;
Hear the voice of my supplications, O Lord.
- 7 O God, the Lord, the strength of my salvation,
Thou hast covered my head in the day of battle.
- 8 Grant not, O Lord, the desires of the wicked :
Further not his wicked device ;
Lest they exalt themselves.

(III. *Destruction of the wicked ; salvation of the good.*)

- 9 As for the head of those that compass me about,
Let the mischief of their own lips cover them.
- 10 Let burning coals fall upon them :
Let them be cast into the fire ;

Into deep pits, that they rise not up again.

- 11 Let not an evil speaker be established in the earth :
Evil shall hunt the violent man to overthrow him.
- 12 I know that the Lord will maintain
The cause of the afflicted, and the right of the
poor.
- 13 Surely the righteous shall give thanks
unto Thy Name :
The upright shall dwell in Thy presence.

REFLECTIONS.

1. Through trials and tribulations of various sorts, we travel onward towards eternal glory. Many of our sorrows are occasioned by the conduct of wicked men; men of violence, of perverse counsels, and of bitter language. In these circumstances, it is our duty, wisdom, and happiness to look to God for deliverance and preservation.

2. In all our troubles we must make our supplication to God. He is our Defender and Preserver: and if we pray to Him in faith and humility, He will defend and preserve us, and frustrate the devices of the wicked.

3. Faith in God, as the God of judgment, righteousness, and truth, must never fail. He will punish the workers of evil; and He will maintain the cause of His people. Persuaded of this, we shall proceed in our course, steadfast and unwavering.

PRAYER.

Be Thou, O Lord, our defender and preserver: in all our troubles may we look to Thee; and so live that

we may dwell in Thy presence for evermore ; through
Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

PSALM CXLI.

Prayer, as Psalm iv. Written by David, probably, when persecuted by Saul. 1 Sam. xxvi. xxvii. 1.

(I. *Prayer for help and to be heard.*)

- 1 Lord, I cry unto Thee : make haste unto me ;
Give ear unto my voice, when I cry unto Thee.
- 2 Let my prayer be set forth before Thee as incense ;
And the lifting up of my hands as the
evening sacrifice.

(II. *To be preserved from sin and idolatry.*)

- 3 Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth ;
Keep the door of my lips.
- 4 Incline not mine heart to any evil thing,
To practise wicked works
with men that work iniquity :
And let me not eat of their dainties.
- 5 Let the righteous smite me ;
It shall be a kindness :
And let him reprove me ;
It shall be an excellent oil,
Which shall not break my head :
For yet my prayer also shall be in their calamities.

(III. *Opposite conduct of Saul and David to each other.*)

When their judges are overthrown in stony places,
They shall hear my words ; for they are sweet.

- 7 Our bones are scattered at the grave's mouth,
As when one heweth and cleaveth wood
upon the earth.

(IV. *Faith and prayer.*)

- 8 But mine eyes are unto Thee, O God the Lord :
In Thee is my trust ; leave not my soul destitute.
9 Keep me from the snares which they have laid for
me,
And the gins of the workers of iniquity.
10 Let the wicked fall into their own nets,
Whilst that I withal escape.

REFLECTIONS.

1. We have need to pray ; to pray earnestly ; and to pray that our prayers may be acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

2. As we pray to be heard and helped, so we must pray to be preserved. It is of great moment that we attend to our words, purposes, and actions ; that we keep from the society of the wicked, hear the reproofs of the wise and good, and pray for the ungodly.

3. Though we meet with cruel conduct, our words must be those of kindness : nor let us account it strange if, with all our kindness, we experience nothing but severity at the hands of men.

4. Faith will enable us to repose in God. To Him we shall pray for preservation. Thus we may be sure that we shall obtain deliverance, while the wicked fall by their own devices.

PRAYER.

Hear our prayers, O Lord; and be Thou our Helper. Keep us from all evil in thought, word, and action. Whatever be the unkindness or cruelty of men, make us to look to Thee, to call upon Thee, and never leave us destitute of Thy help, but make us rejoice in Thy protection and blessing; through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

PSALM CXLII.

DAY 29.]

EVENING PRAYER.

Prayer, as Psalm iv. A Psalm of David when he took refuge in the cave of Adullam.

(Comfort in the day of trouble.)

- 1 I cried unto the Lord with my voice;
With my voice unto the Lord
did I make my supplication.
- 2 I poured out my complaint before Him;
I showed before Him my trouble.
- 3 When my spirit was overwhelmed within me,
Then Thou knewest my path.
In the way wherein I walked
Have they privily laid a snare for me.
- 4 I looked on my right hand, and beheld,
But there was no man that would know me:
Refuge failed me;
No man cared for my soul.
- 5 I cried unto Thee, O Lord:
I said, Thou art my refuge

And my portion in the land of the living.

6 Attend unto my cry ;

For I am brought very low :

Deliver me from my persecutors ;

For they are stronger than I.

7 Bring my soul out of prison,

That I may praise Thy Name :

The righteous shall compass me about ;

For Thou shalt deal bountifully with me.

REFLECTIONS.

The Psalmist here records what his conduct was in the day of trouble : and we have in him an example worthy of our imitation. Our trials may at times be severe : our spirit may be overwhelmed within us. We may derive no comfort from man ; no one may regard our sorrow, or consult our welfare. But let us hold fast our faith : then we shall remember that God knows our case, and that He careth for us ; then, too, we shall look to Him as our refuge and portion, and pour out our hearts before Him, beseeching Him to be our Deliverer, for our own comfort, and for the benefit of others.

PRAYER.

In all our sorrows, O Lord, may we look to Thee for strength and safety, for comfort and deliverance. Deal bountifully with us, that the righteous may see it and rejoice, and that we may praise Thy holy Name for ever ; through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

PSALM CXLIII.

Penitential. A Psalm of David when in trouble.

(I. *Prayer ; complaint.*)

- 1 Hear my prayer, O Lord,
Give ear to my supplications :
In Thy faithfulness answer me,
And in Thy righteousness.
- 2 And enter not into judgment with Thy servant :
For in Thy sight shall no man living be justified.
- 3 For the enemy hath persecuted my soul ;
He hath smitten my life down to the ground ;
He hath made me to dwell in darkness,
As those that have been long dead.
- 4 Therefore is my spirit overwhelmed within me ;
My heart within me is desolate.

(II. *Reflection and Prayer.*)

- 5 I remember the days of old ;
I meditate on all Thy works ;
I muse on the work of Thy hands.
- 6 I stretch forth my hands unto Thee :
My soul thirsteth after Thee, as a thirsty land.
- 7 Hear me speedily, O Lord :
My spirit faileth :
Hide not Thy face from me,
Lest I be like unto them that go down into the pit.
- 8 Cause me to hear Thy lovingkindness in the
morning ;
For in Thee do I trust :
Cause me to know the way wherein I should walk ;
For I lift up my soul unto Thee.

- 9 Deliver me, O Lord, from mine enemies :
I flee unto Thee to hide me.
- 10 Teach me to do Thy will ;
For Thou art my God :
Thy Spirit is good ;
Lead me into the land of uprightness.
- 11 Quicken me, O Lord, for Thy Name's sake :
For Thy righteousness' sake bring my soul out of
trouble.
- 12 And of Thy mercy cut off mine enemies,
And destroy all them that afflict my soul :
For I am Thy servant.

REFLECTIONS.

1. Here is a case of great distress. Here is earnest prayer. Here is deep humility, grounded on the knowledge of God and of ourselves. When our spirits are overwhelmed and our hearts desolate, let us not think it strange ; for such are the trials of the righteous. But if our complaint be sad, our prayer should be earnest and humble. We must approach God under a sense of our guilt, and place our confidence in His mercy according to the Gospel of Christ.

2. In the time of trouble, meditation on the ways of God in former ages, and in former years, is one means of obtaining repose and comfort. The Psalmist here furnishes us with a specimen of earnest prayer. The favour, guidance, deliverance, instruction, and enlivening grace of God, are the blessings which we always need : and for these we should pray, as the Psalmist prayed, with most fervent and intense desire.

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PRAYER.

At all times, O Lord, and especially in our troubles, may we look up to Thee, and call upon Thee, with humble, devout, and believing hearts. Be Thou our Comforter, Deliverer, Instructor, and Guide. Enliven our souls, that we may desire Thee, do Thy will, and be Thy faithful servants; through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

PSALM CXLIV.

DAY 30.]

MORNING PRAYER.

Thanksgiving, as Psalm xviii. A Psalm of David.

(I. *Praise : God's condescension.*)

- 1 Blessed be the Lord my strength,
Which teacheth my hands to war,
And my fingers to fight.
- 2 My goodness, and my fortress;
My high tower, and my deliverer;
My shield, and He in whom I trust;
Who subdueth my people under me.
- 3 Lord, what is man,
That Thou takest knowledge of him!
Or the son of man,
That Thou makest account of him!
- 4 Man is like to vanity:
His days are as a shadow that passeth away.

(II. *Prayer for deliverance.*)

- 5 Bow Thy heavens, O Lord, and come down:

- Touch the mountains, and they shall smoke.
6 Cast forth Thy lightning, and scatter them :
Shoot out Thine arrows, and destroy them.
7 Send Thine hand from above ;
Rid me, and deliver me out of great waters,
From the hand of strange children ;
8 Whose mouth speaketh vanity,
And their right hand is a right hand of falsehood.

(III. *Thanksgiving.*)

- 9 I will sing a new song unto Thee, O God :
Upon a psaltery and an instrument of ten strings
will I sing praises unto Thee.
10 It is He that giveth salvation unto kings :
Who delivereth David His servant from the hurt-
ful sword.

(IV. *Prayer for deliverance and prosperity.*)

- 11 Rid me, and deliver me from the hand of strange
children,
Whose mouth speaketh vanity,
And their right hand is a right hand of falsehood :
12 That our sons may be as plants
Grown up in their youth ;
That our daughters may be as corner-stones,
Polished after the similitude of a palace :
13 That our garners may be full,
Affording all manner of store ;
That our sheep may bring forth thousands
And ten thousands in our streets :
14 That our oxen may be strong to labour ;
That there be no breaking in, nor going out ;

That there be no complaining in our streets.
15 Happy is that people, that is in such a case :
Yea, happy is that people, whose God is the Lord.

REFLECTIONS.

1. He who was the defender of David from his temporal enemies, is our defender from our spiritual enemies. How great is the condescension of God in noticing such feeble and transient creatures ; in providing for their welfare and happiness !

2. Whatever our troubles may be, and whoever our enemies, wicked men or wicked spirits, our defence is in God ; our deliverance is from Him ; and to Him we must present our supplication.

3. As we pray unto God under a sense of our wants, so we praise Him under a conviction of His greatness, and from the experience which we have of His goodness. Salvation, both temporal and spiritual deliverance, is from God ; and that equally in the case of the greatest and lowest of mankind. To Him let all men ascribe blessing and praise.

4. Here we pray for deliverance from our enemies ; for our children, that they may flourish and prosper both in body and soul ; for temporal prosperity, that our fields and our cattle may be fruitful ; for our country, that there be no incursions of enemies into it, no flight from it, no complaining in it. Happy is the people thus highly favoured. Happy in themselves, and happy as a community, are they whose God is Jehovah.

PRAYER.

O blessed God, Thou art the fountain of all goodness: by Thee we are delivered from all our enemies by Thee we are favoured with every blessing, temporal and spiritual. We beseech Thee to look down upon us, and bless us with Thy protection as the God of grace; bless our children and our country. And as we are partakers of Thy lovingkindness, may we live to Thy honour and glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PSALM CXLV.

General acknowledgment of God's goodness and mercy, and particularly of His care and protection of good men, as Psalm xxiii. A Psalm of David.

(I. *Praise.*)

- 1 I will extol Thee, my God, O King;
And I will bless Thy Name for ever and ever.
- 2 Every day will I bless Thee;
And I will praise Thy Name for ever and ever.

(II. *God's greatness.*)

- 3 Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised;
And His greatness is unsearchable.

(III. *His might.*)

- 4 One generation shall praise Thy works to another,
And shall declare Thy mighty acts.

(IV. *His glory.*)

- 5 I will speak of the glorious honour of Thy majesty,
And of Thy wondrous works.

(V. His justice.)

- 6 And men shall speak of the might
of Thy terrible acts:
And I will declare Thy greatness.
7 They shall abundantly utter the memory
of Thy great goodness,
And shall sing of Thy righteousness.

(VI. His mercy.)

- 8 The Lord is gracious, and full of compassion;
Slow to anger, and of great mercy.
9 The Lord is good to all:
And His tender mercies are over all His works.

(VII. The majesty of His kingdom.)

- 10 All Thy works shall praise Thee, O Lord;
And Thy saints shall bless Thee.
11 They shall speak of the glory of Thy kingdom,
And talk of Thy power;
12 To make known unto the sons of men
His mighty acts,
And the glorious majesty of His kingdom.
13 Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom,
And Thy dominion endureth
throughout all generations.

(VIII. His providence.)

- 14 The Lord upholdeth all that fall,
And raiseth up all those that be bowed down.
15 The eyes of all wait upon Thee;
And Thou givest them their meat in due season.
16 Thou openest Thy hand,
And satisfiest the desire of every living thing.

(IX. *His saving mercy.*)

17. The Lord is righteous in all His ways,
And holy in all His works.
- 18 The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon Him,
To all that call upon Him in truth.
- 19 He will fulfil the desire of them that fear Him :
He also will hear their cry, and will save them.
- 20 The Lord preserveth all them that love Him :
But all the wicked will He destroy.

(X. *Praise.*)

- 21 My mouth shall speak the praise of the Lord :
And let all flesh bless His Holy Name
For ever and ever.

REFLECTIONS.

1. We see our duty. The Psalmist asserts his determination to praise God; to bless Him daily, and for ever. Let this be the determination of our souls. He is our God and King: and we should extol Him accordingly.

2—6. We see how the duty is performed. We cannot praise God without knowing Him: and if we know Him, we shall acknowledge, that His greatness is unsearchable; that His acts show His omnipotence; that His works and ways declare His glorious majesty, His justice, and His mercy. He who would praise God with an understanding mind, must study the works and word of God, and behold His perfections as they are there exhibited.

7—9. We see how the kingdom of divine grace forms a peculiar subject of exalted praise. This king-

dom is that on which the saints delight to meditate, and of which they rejoice to speak. It is glorious; full of divine perfection; full of redeeming power; full of mighty acts; and it is everlasting. Here also, ver. 14—16, is a description of God's providence in this kingdom, in upholding, and raising, and sustaining His people. And then we see, ver. 17—20, the goodness of God to His faithful servants, in being nigh to them, answering their prayers, fulfilling their desires, and preserving them.

10. Surely if we meditate on these things, it will be our determination to praise God; and we shall call upon others to join us in the same delightful work.

PRAYER.

O Lord our God, we bless Thee for having revealed Thyself to us, and for setting before us Thy adorable perfections in Thy works, and word, and ways. May we be of the number of those who speak of Thy kingdom; who share its blessings of mercy and power; who call upon Thee, and are sustained and preserved by Thee unto everlasting life; through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

PSALM CXLVI.

General acknowledgment, as Psalm xxiii. Author and occasion unknown.

(I. *Praise.*)

1 Praise ye the Lord.

Praise the Lord, O my soul.

- 2 While I live will I praise the Lord :
 I will sing praises unto my God while I have
 any being.

(II. *Trust in God, not in man.*)

- 3 Put not your trust in princes,
 Nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help.
 4 His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth ;
 In that very day his thoughts perish.
 5 Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his
 help,

Whose hope is in the Lord his God :

- 6 Which made heaven, and earth,
 The sea, and all that therein is :
 Which keepeth truth for ever :

(III. *God our Benefactor.*)

- 7 Which executeth judgment for the oppressed :
 Which giveth food to the hungry.
 The Lord looseth the prisoners :
 8 The Lord openeth the eyes of the blind :
 The Lord raiseth them that are bowed down :
 The Lord loveth the righteous :
 9 The Lord preserveth the strangers ;
 He relieveth the fatherless and widow :
 But the way of the wicked He turneth upside down.

(IV. *Eternity of His kingdom.*)

- 10 The Lord shall reign for ever,
 Even thy God, O Zion, unto all generations.
 Praise ye the Lord.

REFLECTIONS.

1. We see the Lord in the works of creation, the
 ways of providence, and the gracious counsel and work

of redemption ; the riches of love, mercy, and grace, and the blessedness and splendour of life and glory—all these are before our view. Let us, then, praise the Lord ; and praise Him through the whole of our existence.

2. Vain is our trust in man ; a feeble, changeable, and dying creature, whose purposes expire with himself. But confidence in God is a sure support ; for He is almighty, faithful, and everlasting.

3. Here we see the gracious dispensation of God ; the blessings which He confers upon His creatures in their different circumstances. Here, too, we see His righteousness ; for as He is gracious to those who fear Him, so He is awful in His judgments on the wicked.

4. The Lord is King, the Ruler of all worlds, and His kingdom is everlasting. How happy are they who obey Him, trust in Him, and are the objects of His love ! A Being so glorious and gracious is entitled to our unceasing praise.

PRAYER.

Help us, O Lord, to meditate at all times on Thy greatness, glory, and goodness. Grant that we may put our whole trust in Thee, experience Thy loving-kindness according to our several necessities, and praise Thee for ever ; through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

PSALM CXLVII. 1

DAY 30.]

EVENING PRAYER.

Psalm displaying the divine perfections, as Psalm viii.

(I. *Praise.*)

- 1 Praise ye the Lord ;
For it is good to sing praises unto our God ;
For it is pleasant ; and praise is comely.
- 2 The Lord doth build up Jerusalem :
He gathereth together the outcasts of Israel.
- 3 He healeth the broken in heart,
And bindeth up their wounds.

(II. *God's wisdom, power, and goodness.*)

- 4 He telleth the number of the stars ;
He calleth them all by their names.
- 5 Great is our Lord, and of great power :
His understanding is infinite.
- 6 The Lord lifteth up the meek :
He casteth the wicked down to the ground.

(III. *His providence.*)

- 7 Sing unto the Lord with thanksgiving ;
Sing praise upon the harp unto our God :
- 8 Who covereth the heaven with clouds,
Who prepareth rain for the earth,
Who maketh grass to grow upon the mountains.
- 9 He giveth to the beast his food,
And to the young ravens which cry.

(IV. *His delight in His people.*)

- 10 He delighteth not in the strength of the horse :

He taketh not pleasure in the legs of a man.

- 11 The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear Him,
In those that hope in His mercy.

(V. *Security and prosperity of the Church.*)

- 12 Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem ;
Praise thy God, O Zion.
13 For He hath strengthened the bars of thy gates ;
He hath blessed thy children within thee.
14 He maketh peace in thy borders,
And filleth thee with the finest of the wheat.

(VI. *God's power over the elements.*)

- 15 He sendeth forth His commandment upon earth :
His word runneth very swiftly.
16 He giveth snow like wool :
He scattereth forth the hoar-frost like ashes.
17 He casteth forth His ice like morsels :
Who can stand before His cold ?
18 He sendeth out His word, and melteth them :
He causeth His wind to blow, and the waters flow.

(VII. *His ordinances in the Church.*)

- 19 He showeth His word unto Jacob,
His statutes and His judgments unto Israel.
20 He hath not dealt so with any nation :
And as for His judgments, they have not known
them.
Praise ye the Lord.

REFLECTIONS.

1. God builds up His Church, gathers wanderers into His fold, and heals and comforts the contrite in

heart: to praise Him is our duty, and ought to be our delight.

2. God is infinite in knowledge, and power, and goodness: He exalts the humble, and abases the proud and wicked.

3. God's providential care of His creatures, providing food for them, is another subject for praise.

4. Outward and perishable endowments of mind and body do not recommend us to God: His delight is in those who fear Him, trust in His mercy, and order their conversation accordingly.

5. National blessings, strength, peace, and plenty, demand our grateful acknowledgment. O that we, as a people, knew and profited by our blessings!

6. The revolution of the seasons, and the wonders it displays, show to us the power and goodness of God: thus in all His works He reminds us of Himself, and calls upon us to acknowledge Him.

7. In addition to all, and as the crown of all, we are blessed with God's holy word. How many nations are still destitute of this great treasure! May we know our privilege, and praise the Lord!

PRAYER.

Give us grace, O Lord, to meditate with devout and thankful hearts on all Thy goodness to the children of men. O that we may live and believe as Thy highly favoured people; and be such as Thou delightest in; and thus be blessed both now and ever. Amen.

PSALM CXLVIII.

Displaying the divine perfections, as Psalm viii. All things are exhorted to praise God.

(I. Angels.)

- 1 Praise ye the Lord.
Praise ye the Lord from the heavens:
Praise Him in the heights.
- 2 Praise ye Him, all His angels:
Praise ye Him, all His hosts.

(II. The heavenly bodies.)

- 3 Praise ye Him, sun and moon:
Praise Him, all ye stars of light.
- 4 Praise Him, ye heaven of heavens,
And ye waters that be above the heavens.
- 5 Let them praise the Name of the Lord:
For He commanded, and they were created.
- 6 He hath also stablished them for ever and ever:
He hath made a decree which shall not pass.

(III. The ocean.)

- 7 Praise the Lord from the earth,
Ye dragons, and all deeps:

(IV. Storms.)

- 8 Fire, and hail; snow, and vapours;
Stormy wind fulfilling His word:

(V. The earth.)

- 9 Mountains, and all hills;
Fruitful trees, and all cedars:

- 10 Beasts, and all cattle ;
Creeping things, and flying fowl :

(VI. *The human race.*)

- 11 Kings of the earth, and all people ;
Princes, and all judges of the earth :
12 Both young men, and maidens ;
Old men, and children :
13 Let them praise the Name of the Lord :
For His Name alone is excellent ;
His glory is above the earth and heaven.

(VII. *The Church.*)

- 14 He also exalteth the horn of His people,
The praise of all His saints ;
Even of the children of Israel,
A people near unto Him.
Praise ye the Lord.

REFLECTIONS.

1—5. In these five portions of the Psalm all things, both invisible and visible, inanimate and animate, are called upon to praise God. The hosts of happy beings above cease not day or night to celebrate his perfections. The inanimate creation in all its parts, from the splendid sun to the changeful meteor ; from the ocean to the fountain ; sets forth the power, wisdom, and goodness of God in a manner that is seen and understood by all mankind. Animate creation, also, the beasts of the field and the inhabitants of the waters, the soaring bird and the creeping insect, display the attributes of the adorable Creator.

6, 7. How can man, made in the image of God, redeemed by the blood of His Son, and heir of eternity;—how can man be silent? All men, of every age and station, should join in the universal hymn. And surely the Church, “a people near unto Him,” can never be forgetful of her duty; but will praise Him in ceaseless songs of gratitude and joy, whose Name is excellent, whose glory is above the earth and heaven, and who exalts His people to glory and power.

PRAYER.

O Thou great and glorious and gracious God, fill our minds with a just view of Thy works, our hearts with a just sense of Thy goodness, and our souls with a just perception of Thy glory and excellence, that we may be always praising Thee. Made nigh unto Thee by the blood of Christ, and strengthened by Thy Spirit, may we live to Thy honour and glory, and praise Thy holy Name for ever, through the same Thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PSALM CXLIX.

Thanksgiving, as Psalm xlvii.

(I. *Praise for salvation.*)

- 1 Praise ye the Lord.
Sing unto the Lord a new song,
And His praise in the congregation of saints.
- 2 Let Israel rejoice in Him that made him :
Let the children of Zion be joyful in their King.

- 3 Let them praise His name in the dance :
Let them sing praises unto Him with the timbrel
and harp.
- 4 For the Lord taketh pleasure in His people :
He will beautify the meek with salvation.
- 5 Let the saints be joyful in glory :
Let them sing aloud upon their beds.

(II. *The wicked vanquished.*)

- 6 Let the high praises of God be in their mouth,
And a two-edged sword in their hand ;
- 7 To execute vengeance upon the heathen,
And punishments upon the people ;
- 8 To bind their kings with chains,
And their nobles with fetters of iron ;
- 9 To execute upon them the judgment written :
This honour have all His saints.
Praise ye the Lord.

REFLECTIONS.

1. We here see who the godly are: the Israel of God, the children of Zion, new creatures in Christ Jesus, holy and meek. We here see their happiness: they rejoice in God, enjoy the divine favour, are beautified with salvation, and sing the praises of their God and Saviour and King. How blessed is their state! How great is their happiness!

2. The enemies of God's Israel may be many, strong, and violent: but they shall be subdued: the truth, the sword of the Spirit, shall prevail and conquer: the great and mighty of the world shall own its victorious might.

PRAYER.

Grant, O Lord, that we, by Thy mercy and grace, may be Israelites indeed ; a part of the congregation of saints ; and that we may rejoice in Thy salvation, and praise Thee with unfeigned lips. Grant, O Lord, that Thy Church may prosper in the earth ; that Thy word may prevail ; and that all men of all nations may submit themselves to Thee according to the Gospel of Thy Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PSALM CL.

Displaying the divine perfections, as Psalm viii.

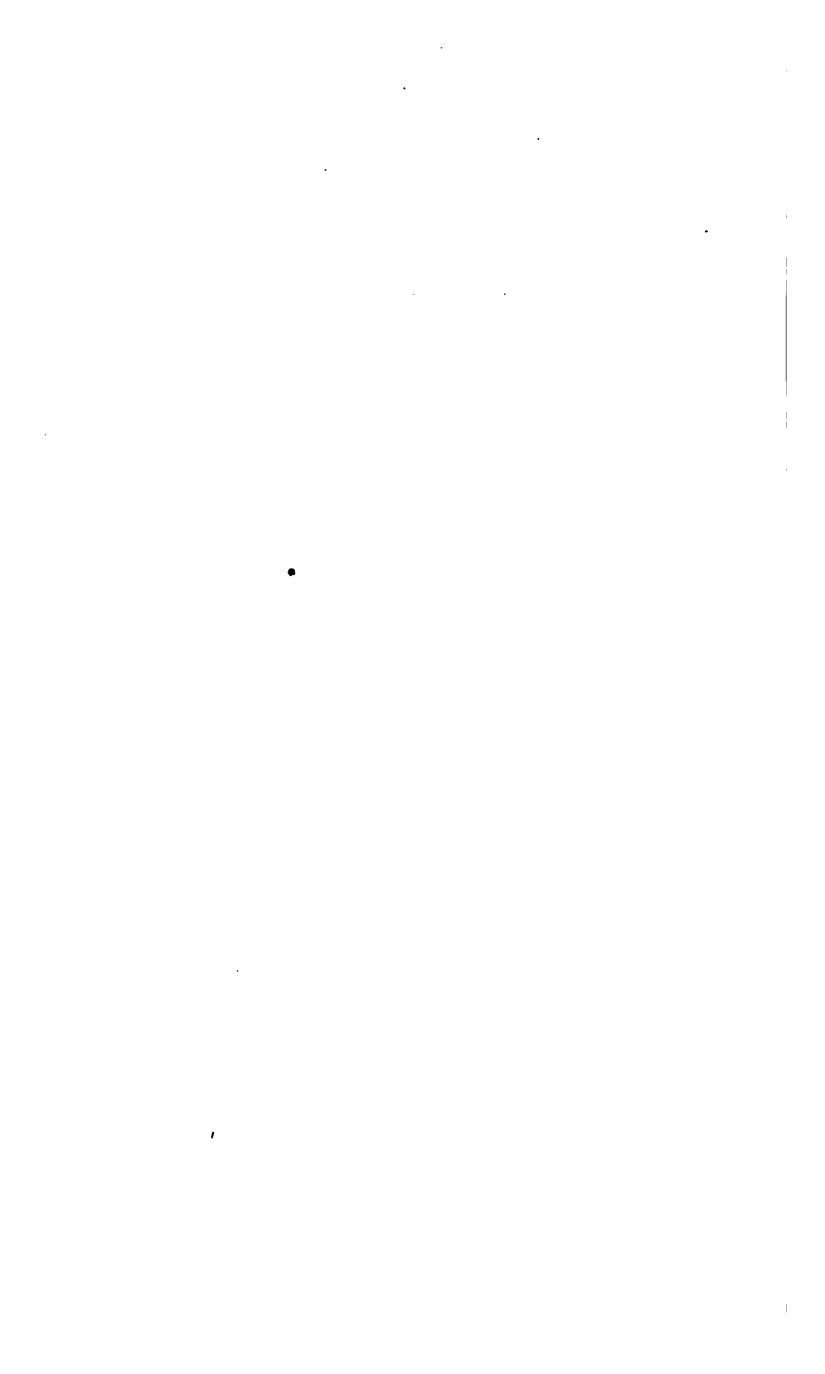
(I. *Exhortation to praise God.*)

- 1 Praise ye the Lord.
Praise God in His sanctuary :
Praise Him in the firmament of His power.
- 2 Praise Him for His mighty acts :
Praise Him according to His excellent greatness.
- 3 Praise Him with the sound of the trumpet :
Praise Him with the psaltery and harp.
- 4 Praise Him with the timbrel and dance :
Praise Him with stringed instruments and organs.
- 5 Praise Him upon the loud cymbals :
Praise Him upon the high sounding cymbals.
- 6 Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord.
Praise ye the Lord.

REFLECTIONS.

What is all creation, heaven the court above, and earth the court below, but the sanctuary of Jehovah?

How great is His power, how mighty His doings, how excellent His greatness! We are lost in the contemplation of His majesty and glory. But we are intelligent creatures: we see Him, we know Him, in His works and in His word: and we ought to account it not only our duty, but our honour and happiness to praise Him. He delights in the praise of His creatures: He has graciously said, "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me." Oh be it our delight to praise Him, to celebrate His perfections, works, counsels, and proceedings, in our psalms and hymns; with all our faculties, tastes, and skill. With the rising and setting sun, in prosperity and adversity, in public and in private, in health and sickness, in life and death, may the joyful language of our hearts and lips be, "Praise ye the Lord." Oh that every son and daughter of Adam may engage in the blessed work of praise; thus anticipating, amidst the clouds and sorrows and imperfections of time, the employment of the glorified in the light and joy and perfection of heaven through eternity. Amen and Amen.



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